

# RELIGION IN LIFE

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## CONTENTS

|  | PAGE                      |
|--|---------------------------|
| Liberalism and Neo-Orthodoxy.....                        | Willard L. Sperry 323     |
| The Faith of Izaak Walton.....                           | J. V. Moldenhawer 336     |
| An Appreciative Spirit in Historical Study of Jesus..... | Donald T. Rowlingson 344  |
| The Apostle.....   | Gerhard Friedrich 352     |
| Thunder on the Right.....                                | William Howard Melish 353 |
| The Truth That Makes Us Free.....                        | Robert E. Fitch 365       |
| Jesus' Teachings Concerning the Kingdom.....             | William S. Hill 373       |
| Finland and Poland After One Year of Peace.....          | Franklin Clark Fry 381    |
| Thomas Hardy's Disbelief.....                            | Norvin Hein 388           |
| Toward a New Synthesis.....                              | Oliver Read Whitley 407   |
| The Church's Ministry to the Physically Ill.....         | Robert D. Morris 417      |
| Hymn Patterns.....                                       | Carl F. Price 431         |
| Christian Perfection—A Theological Reprint.....          | John Fletcher 443         |
| A Review of the Quarter's Fiction.....                   | John C. Schroeder 446     |
| Book Reviews.....  | 451                       |

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# Liberalism and Neo-Orthodoxy

WILLARD L. SPERRY

*A leading liberal thinker appraises political and religious liberalism in the light of history, and points out the enduring values of the liberal position.*

IN OTHER DAYS, when the substance of our Christian faith was supposed to rest upon the letter of a verbally inspired Bible, the believer was expected to buttress his creed with a battery of proof texts. This rather mechanical practice no longer prevails among those of us who, for the want of any other designation, call ourselves "liberals."

There is, however, a verse in Isaiah (32:8), which might almost tempt us to become literalists again: "The liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand."

One has no right to lift a text from an ancient Hebrew prophecy and use it as a vindication of twentieth-century democracy and Protestantism. Yet there was from the first a hint of modernity in the passage. The word translated "liberal" in the King James Version means "generous, noble." The verse is contrasting the generous man with the mean man. The idea of generosity carried with it the suggestion of freedom as well. The verse might be fairly translated, "The free man deviseth free things; and by free things shall he stand." So construed the familiar translation is not false, "The liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand." I am venturing, therefore, to take the verse as my text, at the risk of committing the common homiletical error of "departing from it, and never coming back to it."

## I

The difficulty is, of course, that so far from being a statement of present fact, the text is belied by the facts. The liberal is certainly not "standing," at least with the poise and stature that once were his. He may insist that his "head is bloody, but unbowed," and that he is still "the master of his fate, the captain of his soul." But today Henley's familiar lines seem out of tune with the times, if not actually out of date.

Modern liberalism came over the horizon about the middle of the eighteenth century. It is hard to say when it passed its zenith. We can certainly say that by the end of the first quarter of this century it had lost,

at least for the time being, much of its earlier prestige. August 4, 1914, marked the end of an epoch. Shortly thereafter John Morley, one of the most distinguished liberals of the Victorian Age, resigned from Asquith's cabinet. He defended his action by saying that with the beginning of the World War, the pattern of things with which he had been identified for a long public lifetime was passing away and that the world had entered under formidable omens into a new and different period of history.

It has been said that "all deception beginneth in self-deception." The present-day liberal is not self-deceived. He may still hold by the convictions which are his heritage, but he does not pretend either to himself or to others that he enjoys the general esteem or exercises the wide influence which were his even a generation ago. He is out of fashion, both politically and theologically, and he knows that he is out of fashion. Furthermore, he is puzzled by what has happened to himself, his kind, and his world. Madame Guyon once said, "It is an amazing thing, for a soul that believed herself to be advanced in the way of perfection, when she sees herself go to pieces all at once." Our generation has passed through some such experience. We had believed our civilization to be far advanced in the way of perfection, and yet we have seen much of it go to pieces before our eyes. The modern liberal is using these perplexing and humiliating years as a salutary occasion for self-examination and self-criticism.

Forty years ago I was a member of a small seminar which met in the rooms of Dr. Hastings Rashdall in New College, Oxford, to study under his guidance the nature of ethics. We used to read papers to him and to one another. Woe be to the luckless student who began his paper by saying, "Ethics is the science of morals." Our mentor would stop him at once and say, "What, precisely, do you mean by morals?" Discussion proceeded slowly on this basis but the mental discipline was wholesome. We were taught to examine our axioms and our platitudes.

May I, therefore, take a leaf out of that forty-year-old notebook? What, exactly, do we mean by "liberalism"?

## II

The root of the word itself suggests its most common connotation. The basic idea is that of liberty or, in the equivalent term, of freedom.

In our American culture liberalism was beginning to come into its own by the middle of the eighteenth century. It was both a political and a theological movement. Its early manifestations at that time set

the pattern for later times. Whatever else he may be, the liberal is a man who, in his outlook on life and his mode of living, has achieved something like the "single eye." If it be true that a mind or a culture divided against itself is irreligious, then, whatever its doctrinal content, liberalism is in this respect a qualitatively religious interpretation of life, precisely because it is all of a kind throughout its texture. In general, we are fully warranted in saying that political and religious liberalism tend to stand or fall together. Is it not quite obvious that the decline of political liberalism in the Western world over recent years has been matched by a rise and spread of illiberalism in theology? The two facts are not independent, the one of the other.

Meanwhile, if we go back to our mid-eighteenth-century point of departure, the situation is reasonably clear. Men were eager and determined to be rid of sovereigns, both human and divine, and of the very principle of sovereignty, whether experienced in terms of the English Crown or the "Sultanic" God of Calvinism. They wanted to get out from under all such coercion and to be their own masters. Their reaction was natural, inevitable, and wholesome.

Students of the period tell us that the two favorite texts in New England pulpits from 1750 to 1775 were "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," and "Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." They go on to say that it is doubtful whether there has ever been any other generation of preachers in all Christian history who have made as constant and consistent use of the idea of freedom. Given the standards of the time, those parsons were traitors and heretics, but they were the forefathers of our American liberalism in both church and state.

It is much the fashion nowadays, among the unco-orthodox, to describe and dismiss Unitarianism as a debased form of traditional Christianity which is to be distinguished from orthodox sects by its denial of the doctrines of the Trinity and the Divinity of Christ. The denial of these doctrines, in their traditional form, was and still is a differentia of Unitarianism, but it was very far from being the whole truth or even the major truth of this movement in its origin. Unitarianism was, perhaps, our first formal affirmation in terms of theology, of man's confidence in his own moral freedom and his sense of moral responsibility. The core of its liberalism was a revolt against the pitiless determinism of Calvinistic theology. To the extent that many of our Protestant bodies have moved well away from determinism and toward a confidence in

the freedom of man, these bodies have followed the trail blazed by the Unitarian pioneers of yesterday. Methodism, with its bold doctrine of perfectionism and its stress upon man's ethical initiative is, in this respect, one of the most liberal of our larger Protestant denominations. Its classification in this respect was picturesquely stated in the story which is told of old Father Taylor, the famous Methodist chaplain of the Mariners' House of the Boston Port Society. He was discussing the doctrine of God with a prominent Boston Calvinist. He ended the discussion by saying: "Well, as far as I can see, you and I are in perfect agreement. There is only this minor difference between us; the Being whom you call your God I call my Devil!"

The theological liberals of a hundred years ago did not press the principle of liberty to the breaking point. Ancient formulas were kept in mind as a fixed point of reference. Liberalism was a matter of the much-lengthened tether by which one was staked out to the orthodox past. The length of tether served as a means by which to measure the degree of one's emancipation, and for many persons, even to this day, the greatly widened scope for belief offered all that was felt to be theologically necessary.

So construed and practiced, however, liberalism, precisely because it kept a feeling for past history and awareness of ancient dogmas from which it had departed, tended to become more and more a matter of negation. We are all familiar with the rather tedious type of person who delights to boast of the large number of orthodox propositions which he now gaily disbelieves. Indeed, far too much of all our Protestantism, as the negative connotation of the word implies, is a matter of making an ecclesiastical living off what are said to be the incredible dogmas of Catholicism. In the very nature of the case, and precisely because it was at the first a "protest," liberalism has often failed to state its position in terms of positive affirmations.

Insofar as liberalism has attempted to be positive, it has cast its lot almost wholly with nineteenth-century romanticism and, therefore, with a predominantly subjective interpretation of life and the world. Coleridge spoke as an unequivocal liberal when he said to Wordsworth:

I may not hope from outward forms to win  
The passion and the life whose fountains are within.

Liberal Protestantism would say much the same thing. Run over the pages of any modern hymnal and you cannot help but notice the large

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number of hymns concerned with the subjective states of the worshiper. Thus, psychology tends to become the major theological discipline in liberal circles where believers are more concerned with the states of their own soul than with some realm of objectively experienced reality to which they must "make their submission."

There is probably some interior logic in the history of liberalism by which romantic conceptions of freedom have encouraged increasingly subjective interpretations of religion. In any case there is little doubt that liberalism has, at these two points, overstated its own case and thus invited what it is now receiving, the rebuke and the correction of all that is meant by neo-orthodoxy.

We are not as free as the eighteenth-century founding fathers suggested that we ought to be and might be. Indeed, none of us who are now in the middle and later years are as free as we were even in our own youth. Our time, our money, our choice of a vocation and its conditions, our travel, are all much less a matter of personal choice and much more a matter of necessity imposed upon us from without than they were thirty or forty years ago. It is one of the paradoxes of the time that two wars, fought in defense of the principle of freedom as against the menace of totalitarianism, have been won only at the price of increasing encroachment upon the very liberties they were supposed to vindicate. A recent writer in *Christendom* has commented upon the fact that in the area of our supposedly voluntary charities and philanthropies, the community as a whole and the church in particular no longer accord us our one-time freedom. Church apportionments and community drives, calculated down to the income of each individual, impose upon us a social pressure which it is difficult to resist, save at the price of ostracism from the ranks of respectable persons, and take away from us our one-time intimate joy in our acts of giving. For the moment these mechanized forms of charity seem to be successful. What their permanent effect is to be upon our philanthropies remains to be seen. The day may well come, so far as community drives are concerned, when city, state, and nation may have to take over, in the form of unashamed taxes, the sums of money still nominally raised on the voluntary principle for the support of good causes. For, if the truth be told, there is little spontaneity and less freedom left to the individual in these matters than was the common custom a generation ago.

Neither nature nor society, however, has ever conceded the 100-per-cent enjoyment of absolute liberty envisaged by romantic idealists.

No such liberty exists. Nature, perhaps more than society, environs us with its stern prohibitions. Nature says to us, "This, as a living creature, thou shalt not do, and still continue to live." So, also, the romantic vision of freedom in its political terms presupposes a nihilistic view of the corporate life of man which never has been realized and apparently never can be. For the sake of its own perpetuity society has to mark out chalk lines within which we are to be allowed to live our lives. In this area our present difficulty is that changes in the chalk lines, instead of increasing the dimensions of the field of play, have been steadily diminishing it for the last thirty years.

It may well be that these restricted areas for the exercise of freedom provide a far more faithful transcript of what the life of man on earth has been and ought to be, than did the founding fathers' romantic account of our liberty. Man never was as free as they assumed he might be, and it probably would not have been good for him to be that free.

Nevertheless, it remains true that with our narrowed liberties a certain margin of high spirits or zest for living has gone out of modern life. "It is not now as it hath been of yore. . . . Where'er I go there hath passed away a glory from the earth." For this very reason the narrower chalk lines make the liberty that is left to us much more precious than once it was. We can feel that in the area which matters most, that of our spiritual life, we are still free. We have not been exiled from Paul's words to Philemon, "That thy benefit (i.e., goodness) should be not as it were of necessity, but willingly," or as the modern translations have it, "voluntary, not compulsory."

Whether rightly or wrongly we feel that in this latest struggle to safeguard our restricted liberties we get little help from the neo-orthodox. In the very nature of the case neo-orthodoxy has to react in the direction of a deterministic interpretation of life. The modern liberal may admit that his predecessors, in their enthusiasm, overstated the case for freedom; he is not willing to admit that they were wrong in principle. He still holds that the enjoyment of moral freedom is one of man's most precious privileges and that the exercise of that freedom is his most sacred duty. He cannot concede this ground to the necessitarians. His hereditary freedom was purchased at a great price and he feels that he has no right to part with it for any mess of dubious theological pottage, highly as it may be spiced. The liberal stands by this position, not so much for the sake of his own enjoyment of freedom as for the sake of his fellow men in general. He thinks the principle worth defending.

## III

The whole idea of liberalism has, however, another connotation, which is today even more in dispute than that of human freedom.

One of the leading English liberals of our time—I think it is L. T. Hobhouse—says that the first article of the liberal creed is, “I believe in man.” This affirmation need not be an implied denial of the existence of God. The liberal may quite as well be a theist as an agnostic or an atheist. It is fair to say that the prominence, if not the priority, of the liberal’s faith in man invites an inevitable strain of anthropomorphism in his doctrine of God. The God of liberalism can hardly be the “Wholly Other.” Emphasis is upon the divine immanence, rather than the divine transcendence. And there undoubtedly is in most of the religious liberalism of our day a drift in the direction of humanism, simply because man tends to become more and more preoccupied with his own affairs.

The immediate issue, however, is not that between theism and humanism, but between rival accounts of human nature held by liberalism and neo-orthodoxy. The political and theological pioneers of the mid-eighteenth-century passed a wholehearted vote of confidence in human nature. They thought that man—as a datum—was good rather than bad. They believed that left to himself, quit of intermeddling overlords, he would go right. Lord Bryce, in his *Yale Lectures on Citizenship*, says of our liberal forefathers: “These Perfectionists based their idea of Democracy on a view of human nature which had been held neither in the ancient world, nor (so far as I recall) by anybody in the Middle Ages. They assumed, and the modern apostles of popular government have generally assumed, that the mass of mankind, at any rate in what are called civilized countries, will be Capable Citizens.”<sup>1</sup> This premise for political democracy had its counterpart in the faith of the nascent religious liberalism of the day.

In both church and state this vote of confidence in human nature survived as an axiom and platitude well down to our own day. Of course, there have always been individual skeptics or disillusioned persons who doubted this dogma of the native goodness of our humanity. For example, the long story of Wordsworth’s inner life, as told in *The Prelude* and *The Excursion*, is the record of his attempt to make some sort of peace with himself and his world after his bitter disappointment at the course of the French Revolution. He tells us that in youth he had looked upon

<sup>1</sup> James Bryce, *The Hindrances to Good Citizenship*. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1909, p. 11.

the shield of human nature on its golden side. Together with Coleridge he had dreamed of emigrating to the Carolinas, where they were to find a classic instance of the "noble savage," who was to be the vindication of their liberal confidence in the virtues of an uncorrupted humanity. "Primeval nature's child" was assumed to be a dignified creature, strong in himself, independent, and given to lofty contemplation of the world, "with mind that sheds a light on what it sees." But the poet's "loss of faith in social man," following the Reign of Terror, called for a revision of his dogma about the noble savage. Wordsworth did not have to go to South Carolina to realize the truth about the native whom he would actually have met there:

That pure archetype of human greatness,  
I found him not. There, in his stead, appeared  
A creature squalid, vengeful, and impure;  
Remorseless and submissive to no law  
But superstitious fear, and abject sloth.

Or take another instance of a like skepticism. Thomas Huxley said of his famous Romanes Lecture that it was "a very orthodox discourse on the text, 'Satan, the Prince of this world.'" In elaboration of that text he goes on to say:

The doctrines of predestination, of original sin, of the innate depravity of man and the evil fate of the greater part of the race, of the primacy of Satan in this world, of the essential vileness of matter, of a malevolent Demiurgus subordinate to a benevolent Almighty, who has only lately revealed himself, faulty as they are, appear to me vastly nearer the truth than the "liberal" popular illusions that babies are all born good, and that the example of a corrupt society is responsible for their failure to remain so; that it is given to everybody to reach the ethical ideal if he will only try . . . and that everything will come out right (according to our notions) at last.<sup>2</sup>

Realistic biologists have never accepted, without grave reservations, the romantically cheerful view of human nature which has been the temper of orthodox liberalism. The trouble has been that they can still hear, in man's accents, "the yelp of the beast."

If liberalism appeals its case from the biologist to the psychologist, it gets little help. For the so-called "new psychology" takes a very sombre view of our mental and emotional underworld.

If [says Jung] a man turns away from the terrifying prospect of a blind world in which building and destroying successively tip the scales, and if he turns inward upon the recesses of his own mind, he will discover a chaos and a darkness there

<sup>2</sup> Leonard Huxley, *Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley*. New York, D. Appleton and Company, 1902, Vol. II, p. 322.

which he would gladly ignore. Science has destroyed even the refuge of the inner life. What was once a sheltering haven has become a place of terror.<sup>8</sup>

In short, all along the line and down the years, there have always been men who have doubted the account of human nature given by the eighteenth-century pioneers of liberalism in church and state. They have suspected that the initial vote of confidence was way in advance of the actual human fact. Bryce himself, in the passage cited, goes on to consider the defects of democracy in operation, and to concede, in spite of great achievements, the element of disappointment which has attended the whole democratic experiment. All in all, our persistent difficulty has been this: the average citizen has not been so good a man as the theory said he would be.

To this stubborn strain of skepticism the events of the last thirty years have given added warrant. We have had to witness acts, on the part of supposedly decent men, of which we should have thought civilized humanity incapable. I need not labor the case. The general decline in the whole moral level of life in the Western world is too obvious to need description or proof. We have all witnessed it, and have been aware of it in our own minds and members. We are neither morally as sensitive nor religiously as hopeful as once we were.

Therefore, the liberal is quite willing to concede that his founding fathers in church and state oversimplified their account of human nature and "overbid their hand" in behalf of man's native excellence. Any fair-minded liberal can quite understand the occasion for the theological reaction which bears the name of "neo-orthodoxy." He realizes that, precisely as the liberalism of two centuries ago was a natural and valid revolt against the elder orthodoxy, which had invited its own rebuke by carrying its minimizing doctrine of man to an indefensible extreme, so in like manner romantic liberalism has carried its maximizing doctrine of man to such lengths that it was fairly challenged by such facts as Belsen and Buchenwald. Insofar as the illiberal facts refuted the liberal dogma they seemed to require a restatement of the doctrine of man after a pattern which had been abandoned two centuries ago.

For want of an adequate contemporary theological apparatus, the neo-orthodox movements of our day tend to recover and to reaffirm the theology of Calvin and Edwards. To a generation that has grown up with liberalism as its mental stock in trade, neo-orthodoxy has the appeal

<sup>8</sup>C. G. Jung, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*. New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1933, p. 236.

which always attends novelty and the strategic advantage accorded by the appearance of novelty. The market place is always crowded with a vagrant multitude seeking "some new thing." But the premises of the neo-orthodoxy of our day are traditional, rather than novel.

If we were to single out some one emphasis of this "new" movement which invites sober second thought, it is the prominence given to the cult of irrationality. As neo-orthodoxy transfers our hope of salvation from the area of human freedom to that of divine necessity, from man's will to the grace—even the irresistible grace—of God, so also it harks back to the disparagement of human reason, which was part of the stock in trade of the elder orthodoxy. The modern cult of irrationality derives immediately from Kierkegaard, but he was not its first author. Thus Chapter III, Book II of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* begins with the thesis, "The intellect and will of man wholly corrupt." The Bible, Calvin goes on to say, "derides the human mind as foolish, frivolous, perverse, and insane."

Running true to this form Kierkegaard says that the relationship of the believer to God "to be real, must baffle reason and outstrip all interpretation; for what is faith except a leap of despair? . . . Faith is wholly opaque and irrational . . . God is the most ridiculous being that ever existed."<sup>4</sup> Kierkegaard, like many another propagandist, may have caricatured his own position, but his more sober successors do not deny his main thesis. Brunner tells us that, in the revelation of God in Christ, we find "no continuity with our human ideas, no, not even with the best and highest we possess."<sup>4</sup>

Neo-orthodoxy, when it labors this theme, becomes to all intents and purposes a form of modern Marcionism. The fact that, in his own day, Marcion was declared a heretic will probably not dismay his latest successors. They would merely reply that he was, nevertheless, right and the church was wrong. On the other hand, those of us who are not yet prepared to part finally with our liberal heritage are entitled to our reflections upon this whole cult of irrationality.

There is no doubt that our human wit and skills have been mainly addressed, for the last thirty years, to perfecting the devices by which we may take one another's lives in war. There has been great progress in the remedial arts, but this progress has followed after the development of the means for destruction. This preoccupation with the arts and apparatus of war has coincided with a general loss of faith in God, and thus

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in *Harvard Divinity School Bulletin*, March, 1946, pp. 6off.

of the moral restraints of religion. Man, left to his own promptings, has certainly not proved to be the benign and benevolent creature he was expected to be. If our total mode of life over these last years be deemed rational, then there is much warrant for the cult of irrationality. But the plain truth is that very few thoughtful men will claim that the history of these years is a transcript of reasonableness.

Meanwhile, the deliberate cult of irrationality, in the name of religion and in the quest for religion, is no new thing. It is an old, familiar, and recurring phenomenon in the history of Christianity. We meet it during the earliest centuries in the forms, *Credo quia impossibile est* and *Credo quia absurdum est*. The same mood may be found also at certain stages in the history of philosophy. Whether in theology or philosophy this cult is always affected by the subtlest and most sophisticated minds. They seem to derive an intense pleasure in employing their brains in dispraise of our human reason. One thinks, for example, of Bertrand Russell's magnificent brief for the meaninglessness of life and for a cosmic pessimism. But no life can be wholly meaningless or unrewarding which yields such gorgeous English prose as Bertrand Russell has written into his essay. Life may well be "a tale, told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." To the poet who wrote that line and to us who read it, however, life signifies a great deal when it enables us to say so in such moving and memorable words.

It is no more possible, therefore, to take the modern cult of irrationality seriously today than it has been at any time in the past. This cult must always have about it the suggestion of an affected pose, rather than a position seriously held. The very wit with which this thesis is defended refutes it. Furthermore, one cannot help noticing that this cult flourishes in days when men are tired and sophisticated. The willingness to renounce one's "reasonable service" in the name of religion is not a characteristic of the ages of faith, but rather of those in which a subtle skepticism is the order of the day.

In any case, there is no evidence to be adduced from the past history of Christian thought to prove that we shall ever succeed in frustrating the activities of the human will and of human reason, within the realms which identify with the religious life. They refuse to be handed over to Satan. Calvin and Edwards had to find, in practice, an area within which the will might be busily and properly employed, even though they denied its relevance for our salvation. Their thousands of pages, many of which are devoted to the disparagement of reason, are a magnificent tribute to

the very principle which they profess to repudiate. The Christian mystics discovered that the self, which they were forever bowing out the front door, had a perverse way of always getting in again through a back door. So with the neo-orthodox disparagement of our human will and human reason. Even within the realms of grace and revelation you cannot get permanently rid of them.

## IV

The liberal, then, interprets neo-orthodoxy as a natural and perhaps inevitable swing of the pendulum away from the end of the arc which he had reached. If he concedes that he has probably overstated his case, he has good reason to suppose, given the long history of Christian thought, that neo-orthodoxy in the swing away from his position is already in process of overstating its own case, and must invite in turn and at some later time a fresh liberal reaction. Therefore, he believes that the position which he has held is one which is worth holding for the sake of the total cause at some as yet undated future day. He is not, culturally or politically or religiously, a flash-in-the-pan of history. He represents one of the two foci at the extreme of the ellipse of the religious life. The antithetical case would be meaningless in want of him. So much, perhaps, he has learned from these recent years and is willing to concede to his neo-orthodox friends with their "dialectic theology." This has been, for him, a genuine discovery.

As he meditates upon the gravest of the many charges brought against him, that of "pride"—the sin of *hubris*, insolence—he is not personally aware of having sinned that particular sin. It is probably true that our civilization is far too materialistic, that here in America the love of money and the worship of bigness verge on a kind of self-sufficient arrogance. Perhaps "liberal" Christians are more liable to the sinister seduction of these tempers than are the orthodox—although I should be perfectly willing to count noses on that issue.

But, in this area, I can never forget Father Tyrrell's remark about Catholicism, "If Rome cuts her little finger she bleeds to death." All closed systems are "bleeders," and from the peril of what might be called theological haemophilia, a good deal of modern orthodoxy is not free. Whereas much of our liberalism, simply because it is not a closed system, seems by contrast a kind of "blood-donor" type of religion. It can lose not a little of its doctrinal substance if need be, and yet renew its vital principle thereafter.

If I may say a word in behalf of my fellow liberals, we are freshly

aware of certain "sins" which we have, perhaps, failed to identify in ourselves in the past. But we are not peculiarly aware of the sin of *hubris*. That may be because we are, in this test case, self-deceived, and have yet to be awakened to the truth of ourselves. But we humbly submit that, in the attitude of the party-of-the-other-part toward us, we cannot always discern that lack of a certain truculent self-confidence, which is to be equated with the rare virtue of humility. In this matter of indicting a whole tradition one is reminded of Emerson's very shrewd remark, which is nonetheless true because it antedated the days of psychiatry, that he who talks too much about a virtue is himself suspect.

Finally, the truth about human nature seems to me probably to lie somewhere between liberalism and neo-orthodoxy. Either alone is a half truth, ultimately self-defeating and thus self-correcting. The apologists for liberalism and the proponents of neo-orthodoxy might well lay aside their arguments for the moment and join in a meditative reading of Blaise Pascal. What Pascal has to say about "Man's Disproportion—The Greatness and the Littleness of Man" is very relevant to the present issue. He was a curious compound of orthodoxy and liberalism. But that is another story.

# The Faith of Izaak Walton

J. V. MOLDENHAWER

*The serene simplicity of the beloved "Angler" was that of a man of childlike faith who "studied to be quiet in an evil time."*

WHOSOEVER turns the leaves of *The Compleat Angler* soon becomes blissfully conscious that he is breathing an air of pervasive serenity and happiness. With the first words of the first dialogue the reader is pleasantly aware that he is joining the company of "the quality."

PISCATOR. You are well overtaken, Gentlemen! A good morning to you both! I have stretched my legs up Tottenham Hill to overtake you, hoping your business may occasion you towards Ware whither I am going this fine fresh May morning.

And every step of the way as he walks by the streams, or sits under the trees, or in vine-clad arbors, and spends evenings and nights in quiet, pretty, and well-kept country inns, this air of serene well-being never deserts us. The reason is a very simple one. We are listening to the voice of a well-brought-up, contented, and truly pious son of the Anglican Church in the seventeenth century.

The early editors of Walton were content to accept this obvious and satisfactory explanation. So it was with early readers with no editorial burden on their backs. It was so with Moses Browne and Sir John Hawkins; it was so even with the overcriticized John Major. All these and the readers of their days accepted as perfectly natural and right the intimacy of good manners and good morals and general cheerfulness with a steadfast faith in the goodness of God. It was not until the pale and sickly doubts of the nineteenth century began to make men's minds uncomfortable that editors and readers set about the discovery of some other reason than the obvious one for the beautiful quiet gladness of Walton's books and Walton's life. First, and always thereafter, there is apology—as for a good man's minor faults and follies: then sterner measures are taken, and we are practically told that we shall do well to regard Walton's opinions, like so many of his pieces of expert advice to fishermen, as being completely antiquated. The most unhandsome trick played by any editor is that of which Mr. Keynes, editor of the some-

what pretentious and quite expensive Nonesuch edition of 1928, is guilty. This gentleman has the effrontery of refusing to accept Walton's own final recension in the fifth edition of 1676, and prints instead the fourth of 1668. He states his reasons, apparently unaware that it is not a justification of his procedure, but merely a bald and unpleasant revelation of his own state of mind. What Keynes leaves out is the expansion of the final discourse in the book—a passage upon which Walton evidently spent much thought and loving labor. And the reader is to be deprived of this for the very bad reason that it is (to Mr. Keynes) a piece of tiresome sermonizing.

And so we come to the heart of the matter. This famous book, *The Compleat Angler*, is the product of a deeply religious mind, the same mind that produced those masterpieces in friendly biography, the lives of Donne and Wotton and Hooker and Herbert and Sanderson. He is indeed writing a book that has as its theme only the praise of one of man's ancient and pleasant recreations—the art of Angling. But such a man as Walton could not write on any theme without writing out of a heart made quiet and strong by a lively, yet steadfast dependence upon God. And for us who are believers, this is a most happy circumstance. If we are anglers, too, though of the most unsophisticated—our happiness, as we read, is all the greater.

Let me move on to the consideration of Walton's faith in some detail, but not enough, I trust, to make it seem that I am dealing with a piece of systematic theology. There is a good reason for our simple study of this book in the fact that for most of us, whether of nonconformist or Episcopal tradition, there has been a tendency to lose sight of all but the very greatest figures in seventeenth-century England. Everything has been overshadowed by the austere, not to say menacing figures of Cromwell and Milton—the air being made fit for common men to breathe only by the genial humanity of Bunyan. All this is nonconformist! And it has been much too easy to accept as final because of substantial accuracy, the nonconformist opinion always disrespectful in various degrees of the Church of England. Now those of us who have refreshed ourselves at many little Anglican springs are convinced that it is gross misunderstanding to suppose that these poured waters of no consequence into the River of God.

If it will make anyone a more acquiescent listener, I am prepared to admit that we are not to expect much of the gigantic and heroic in

Walton. He and his companions did for the most part attempt no more than to be quiet in an evil time. But we should be far wrong if we supposed that the Church of England clergymen whom Walton loved did not suffer for their faith. The scantiest account of such men as Jeremy Taylor and Bishop Ken and other royalist ministers will make it clear that during the Puritan ascendancy, theirs was no bed of roses. But theirs was in general the peaceable type of mind. And it is that peaceable mind—the mind willing to accept the authority of church and king as being on the whole plain instances of the powers that be, ordained of God; it is that mind and its religion which we observe with so much affectionate regard in *The Angler* and Walton's other books. *The Lives* (except for a citation or two) must be left for another occasion. Here and now we deal with the slender little volume that shares with *Pilgrim's Progress* and *Robinson Crusoe* the distinction of being one of the most frequently reprinted books in the English language.

If you are still maintaining a stoutly nonconformist state of mind, much may be done toward its modification by asking your immortal soul such questions as these following. What good did Christian piety get out of the overhearty Protestantism which destroyed lovely baptismal fonts and rood-screens in the first age of what set out to be pure and honest reformation? What good came of tearing down and committing to the flames the glorious painted and gilded images of angels and saints? How much better off were Christian hearts for being compelled to look at a timbered ceiling, drab and gray, that aforetime blazed with serried colored ranks of seraphim and cherubim and all the soldiers of the heavenly army? Was the heart purer or only more stubborn for refusing to kneel when receiving the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper?

You see, best beloved and most ignorant, the plain Anglican like Walton, was simply a person who had asked all these questions and received or made answer to the effect that so far as he was concerned, a great number of beautiful and profitable ways had been denominated sinful and unworthy by men and by laws notable chiefly for their lack of imaginative spiritual comprehension.

So among other qualities essential to his very being Walton had a deep respect and affection for the traditional ways of thought and worship in the Church of England. And his affection was quite intelligent. He fairly exercised his intellect in these preferences. No man can read his reflections, agreeing or not, without respect for his mental processes.

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With the sort of simple-mindedness that is not at all foolishness, he accepted, held fast, believed and practiced the religion he had been taught as a child. For him the prayer book was not a compilation of rules imposed by ecclesiastical authority, as by tyrants upon enslaved subjects, but rather the helpful leading of true fathers in God showing God's children under their care how to live and how to pray. That book was indeed of glorious design, simple in essence and elaborate only as elaboration followed the line of beauty, according to which men might cultivate holy living as well as devotion both public and private. Consider this delightful allusion (not the only one) to the eminent churchman whose little books of Christian instruction had been studied by small English boys from the time of Shakespeare's childhood.

The first is Dr. Nowel, sometime dean of the cathedral church of St. Paul, in London, where his monument stands yet undefaced; a man that, in the reformation of Queen Elizabeth, not that of Henry VIII, was so noted for his meek spirit, deep learning, prudence, and piety, that the then Parliament and Convocation, both, chose, enjoined, and trusted him to be the man to make a Catechism for public use, such a one as should stand as a rule for faith and manners to their posterity. And the good old man, though he was very learned, yet knowing that God leads us not to heaven by many, nor by hard questions, like an honest Angler, made that good, plain, unperplexed Catechism which is printed with our good old Service-book. I say, this good man was a dear lover and constant practiser of Angling, as any age can produce: and his custom was to spend besides his fixed hours of prayer, those hours which, by command of the church, were enjoined the clergy, and voluntarily dedicated to devotion by many primitive Christians, I say, besides those hours, this good man was observed to spend a tenth part of his time in Angling; and, also, for I have conversed with those which have conversed with him, to bestow a tenth part of his revenue, and usually all his fish, amongst the poor that inhabited near to those rivers in which it was caught; saying often, "that charity gave life to religion": and, at his return to his house, would praise God he had spent that day free from worldly trouble; both harmlessly, and in a recreation that became a churchman.

I have included this part about Angling so that I may not be accused of concealing that which specially warmed our Izaak's heart as he remembered the good dean. Yet it should be obvious, too, that Walton the Angler is proud of this brother in the fraternity chiefly because the record of Nowel's life was that of a great and faithful son of the Church of England who spent the greater part of his life endeavoring to make both familiar and dear to his countrymen, young and old, the truly heavenly ways of that church so dear to him as it was later to Walton and all his other contemporaries happy in their willing conformity.

Walton's prevailing mood was one of a profound content. It may indeed be said that his quiet satisfaction as a churchman was only one side of a very many-sided contentment. He would not have said with Pope, "Whatever is, is right"—he had seen too much that seemed to him surely quite deadly wrong. But he would have slipped at once into Stevenson's sentiment—"The world is so full of a number of things, . . . ." Walton really did believe in contentment. He took quite seriously the injunction against being caught and held by love of this world's goods. He did actually believe that it was a virtue to be content with a little: that it was truly praising God for a man to say, a long way this side of riches, "I have enough." Walton himself said it and acted upon it, retiring from business at about fifty, with no more than a modest competence. He loved a quiet life; he deliberately sought it and had it to the day when he died, ninety years old, still serenely trusting in God. All his life long he thanked God for it and believed heartily that this modest and happy way was that which God approved for all men.

Seeing him thus, how natural we feel it to be when he bursts forth not once but frequently into delighted thanksgiving to God for the wealth of beautiful and wonderful things which he the Creator has given his children to enjoy in this present world. There is hardly a page in *The Angler* that does not contain some single and thankful allusion to the excellent work of the Almighty Maker of heaven and earth. It is in the conversation during the first day that we hear from the falconer as he describes the element of air and the marvelous flying creatures at home in its high and low places, that famous description, so glowing with fervid admiration and pleasure, of the birds of many kinds. He reaches a happy climax of gratitude for the gift of song bestowed by God upon one of them—I think most loved by all Englishmen.

But the Nightingale, another of my airy creatures, breathes such sweet loud musick out of her little instrumental throat, that it might make mankind to think miracles are not ceased. He that at midnight, when the very labourer sleeps securely, should hear, as I have very often, the clear airs, the sweet descants, the natural rising and falling, the doubling and redoubling of her voice, might well be lifted above earth, and say, "Lord, what musick hast thou provided for the Saints in Heaven, when thou afforest bad men such musick on Earth!"

The mention of the saints in heaven brings us face to face with that which for Walton as for every well-taught Christian is the very top of our faith and the end of our aspiration. He believed with a steady satis-

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faction that when God was done with him here he would open to him, as to all his trustful and obedient children, the doors of his eternal Kingdom of peace and joy where with angels and archangels, with saints and martyrs, he would evermore sing his great Creator's praise. How naturally he speaks of his old companion on fishing excursions, Oliver Henly, as being "now with God." And what thrilling upsurge of hope there is in that paragraph (if I may, for once, quote from the *Lives* instead of *The Angler*) which ends his brief biography of John Donne.

He was earnest and unwearied in the search of knowledge, with which his vigorous soul is now satisfied, and employed in a continual praise of that God that first breathed it into his active body, that body which once was a temple of the Holy Ghost, and is now become a small quantity of Christian dust.

But I shall see it reanimated.

I must allude to one other characteristic of Walton's religion, his high standard of personal morality. There is no bawdy talk, no nastiness or coarseness in this amazing little volume. There is the sort of gentility that can spring only out of unaffected inner cleanness of mind. It is indeed a rather happy thought that so far as the moralities are concerned, Walton was a quite strict Puritan; he has the Puritan conscience without the Puritan censoriousness. I am all the readier to point this out since I do not remember to have seen it elsewhere alluded to—much less commented on. Though this air of well-bred strictness is everywhere, it attains a frosty and well-earned sharpness in the place where Piscator and his younger pupil are talking of the company with whom they have spent the previous evening.

And, now, to your question concerning your host. To speak truly, he is not to me a good companion, for most of his conceits were either scripture jests, or lascivious jests; for which I count no man witty: for the devil will help a man, that way inclined, to the first; and his own corrupt nature, which he always carries with him, to the latter. But a companion that feasts the company with wit and mirth, and leaves out the sin which is usually mixed with them, he is the man; and indeed such a companion should have his charges borne; and to such company I hope to bring you this night; for at Trout-hall, not far from this place, where I purpose to lodge to-night, there is usually an Angler that proves good company. And let me tell you, good company and good discourse are the very sinews of virtue. But for such discourse as we heard last night, it infects others: the very boys will learn to talk and swear, as they heard mine host, and another of the company that shall be nameless. I am sorry the other is a gentleman, for less religion will not save their souls than a beggar's: I think more will be required at the last great day.

So turning the leaves of this precious little old book, we draw close

to the end—and also happily to the end of this rambling essay. Here, a little before “finis,” we come upon the passage (referred to above) which was disliked by Sir Harris Nicolas and finally deleted in the Nonesuch edition by the confident and unreverent hand of Dr. Keynes. You are to recall that this passage was written for the last edition which Walton, in the old phraseology, “overlooked”—and that it bears the date of 1676. All that this seems to have suggested to Dr. Keynes was that Walton was a very old man, eighty-three years old indeed, and that he must have been more or less a victim of senility and its customary prosiness. (He might have remembered that the *Life of Sanderson*, a very vigorous composition, was written at about this time.) At all events what the brilliant modern editor did not think worth while was to inquire, what beyond mere garrulity might have moved Walton to insert near the end of *The Angler* this meditation on contentment. May we not guess that not only advance in years but his outlook on the England of those very years persuaded him that here was a word sadly needed by his contemporaries? We shall do well to remember with Walton what a wicked world of contriving and plotting, with greed of gain at the heart of it, had increased and flourished in the eight years that lay between the fourth edition and the fifth. At all events this was by intent. And no editor has the right to render void the word which Izaak Walton wished to engrave more sharply than in the former editions upon the mind of his readers. Consider it.

I knew a man that had health and riches; and several houses, all beautiful, and ready furnished; and would often trouble himself and family to be removing from one house to another: and being asked by a friend why he removed so often from one house to another, replied, “It was to find content in some one of them.” But his friend, knowing his temper, told him, “If he would find content in any of his houses, he must leave himself behind him; for content will never dwell but in a meek and quiet soul.” And this may appear, if we read and consider what our Saviour says in St. Matthew’s Gospel; for he there says,—“Blessed be the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed be the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed be the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. And, Blessed be the meek, for they shall possess the earth.” Not that the meek shall not also obtain mercy, and see God; and be comforted, and at last come to the kingdom of heaven: but in the meantime, he, and he only, possesses the earth, as he goes towards that kingdom of heaven, by being humble and cheerful, and content with what his good God had allotted him. He has no turbulent, repining, vexatious thoughts that he deserves better; nor is vexed when he sees others possess of more honour or more riches than his wise God has allotted for his share: but he possesses what he has with a meek and contented quietness, such a quietness as makes his very dreams pleasing, both to God and himself.

As for money, which may be said to be the third blessing, neglect it not: but note, that there is no necessity for being rich; for I told you, there be as many miseries beyond riches as on this side them: and if you have a competence, enjoy it with a meek, cheerful, thankful heart. I will tell you, Scholar, I have heard a grave Divine say, that God has two dwellings; one in heaven, and the other in a meek and thankful heart; which Almighty God grant to me, and to my honest Scholar. And so you are welcome to Tottenham High-Cross.

And the very end must be the conclusion of this same discourse which is also the end of the book. It is a passage that is known nearly, if not quite by heart, by all constant readers of *The Compleat Angler*. In form it is divided, with that feeling of comradeship so characteristic of Walton and his book, between two speakers, each contributing his proper part to one of the most pleasing and moving little pieces of prose in the English language. And the very end—the end, as it were, plus the end, is a quotation from First Thessalonians, so that we have a perfect indication of Walton's pious reference of all, to the authority of Scripture, and in place of a colophon, four words of Holy Writ.

In an early nineteenth-century copy of *The Angler*, there stretches diagonally across the first page a beautifully engraved copper plate map of the ground covered by Piscator and his fellows. That stretch of country lives in the imagination of every reader of the book as surely one of the pleasantest parts of England's green and pleasant land. He looks at the map and feels that all is right and in its proper place. These unsurpassed conversations began at the lower right-hand corner at the summit of Tottenham Hill. And they reach their perfect conclusion when, on the fifth day, after having fished from one end of this little heaven on earth to the other, Piscator and Venator are once more together at Tottenham High-Cross.

When I would beget content, and increase confidence in the power, and wisdom, and providence of Almighty God, I will walk the meadows, by some gliding stream, and there contemplate the lilies that take no care, and those very many other various little living creatures that are not only created, but fed, man knows not how, by the goodness of the God of Nature, and therefore trust in him. This is my purpose; and so, let everything that hath breath praise the Lord: and let the blessing of St. Peter's Master be with mine.

PISCATOR. And upon all that are lovers of virtue; and dare trust in his providence; and be quiet; and go a-Angling.

"Study to be quiet."

# An Appreciative Spirit in Historical Study of Jesus

DONALD T. ROWLINGSON

*Appreciation of Jesus means neither loss of objectivity nor a fixed and finished Christology; it simply means taking into account all the facts.*

IT IS CUSTOMARY to equate the task of the biblical scholar with that of the general historian, with emphasis upon the scientific discipline which is involved. This is the chief characteristic of most efforts by accredited students to reconstruct the thought and actions of Jesus. Since the dawn of modern biblical criticism the major contributions to our knowledge of Jesus have come from scholars who aimed at a scientific analysis of the sources on the assumption that the Gospels were, like all other historical deposits, subject to the canons of historical investigation in general.

At the present moment, however, it is being vigorously urged that this is not enough. In the study of the Bible as a whole, and certainly of the Gospels, sound learning and scientific methods must be supplemented, it is said, by "a sympathetic, understanding faith."<sup>1</sup> A. E. J. Rawlinson insists that the student of Jesus who would bring out the true meaning of the facts with which history deals in the Gospels must interpret them "in the light of Christian presuppositions."<sup>2</sup> By "Christian presuppositions" he means the conviction of faith that the revelation of God in Jesus is final. In a similar vein is the contention of Alan Richardson to the effect that the historian who would interpret Jesus aright must first penetrate "the incognito of Jesus" and see "behind the Jesus of Galilee the Christ of New Testament faith."<sup>3</sup> The only alternative to such faith, it is alleged, is historical skepticism. This skepticism produces blindness, not only in regard to the meaning of Jesus for contemporary Christian experience, but also as concerns the essential significance of events "in their historical context." Bluntly put, it is claimed that the professing Christian alone is equipped to reconstruct

<sup>1</sup> G. E. Wright, "Neo-Orthodoxy and the Bible," *The Journal of Bible and Religion*, XIV, 2 (May, 1946), pp. 87-93.

<sup>2</sup> *Christ in the Gospels*, Oxford University Press, 1944, pp. 113f.

<sup>3</sup> *The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels*, Harper & Brothers, p. 137.

the historical Jesus with discernment. He must avail himself of modern techniques of Gospel study, but without the insight which faith yields his interpretation of Jesus will be barren.

There are elements of truth and of error in this idea. The purpose of these pages is to emphasize, as constructively as possible, the elements of truth which are presented, and, by implication, to temper the error which is embodied in the idea. We are especially interested in the bearing of the positive values in this approach upon the "disinterested spirit" to which historical science claims to be committed. Charles Guignebert, one of the most brilliant of modern students of Jesus, has stated the meaning of an objective or a disinterested spirit as many historians understand it: "The historian knows nothing and believes nothing in advance, save that it is incumbent on him to believe nothing, and that he knows nothing."<sup>4</sup> Strict neutrality, without bias one way or the other, and the intention to allow facts to dictate conclusions without regard for vested interests or ulterior motives: that is the standard of historical integrity.

The point of departure of our analysis is assent to the virtues and the necessity of a disinterested spirit, but with the thought that a truly disinterested spirit means more than strict neutrality as defined by Guignebert. It does mean devotion to truth and the most rigid attempt to act impartially, so far as historical decisions are concerned, but it also means taking into account *all* the facts relative to the investigation. In regard to the study of the historical Jesus, there are at least three facts, implied by those who insist upon faith as well as acuteness of intellect, which every student must consider and take into account as he approaches the task of reconstructing the mind and career of the Jesus of history. They are just as significant as the facts which lie embedded in the sources and the methods which enable the historian to lay them bare; just as important as the facts about Jesus' environment. And some decision about them must be made "in advance" of the actual investigation itself.

The first fact is Jesus' unprecedented impact upon history, considered simply from as objective a frame of mind as possible. Whether we call Jesus "great" or "greatest," whether we view his revelation of God as relatively or finally decisive, it is not debatable that he has mightily influenced the course of human events. Whether we love him or despise him, it is not an unfair judgment which concludes that he is

<sup>4</sup> *Jesus*, trans. by S. H. Hooke, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1935, p. 410.

"central in the human story."<sup>5</sup> That is not only the testimony of faith; it is the witness of history itself.

The historian cannot approach the study of Jesus' life as though that fact did not exist. He must come to terms with it "in advance." Furthermore, his reaction to it will influence the temper of his study. The natural scientist comes to terms "in advance" with a theory of the universe. He must decide whether it is irrational and arbitrary in its actions or rational and uniform. The whole structure of modern science is constructed upon the latter premise. The historian, likewise, must form some presupposition regarding a philosophy of history; the historical process is characterized as providential in its workings, or entirely human; in combination these points of view yield a theistic-human philosophy. Furthermore, in forming a philosophy of history there is involved of necessity some premise of a Christological nature relative to the fact of Jesus' unique influence in history. The premise may be negative or positive. If positive, it may be either the conviction that Jesus was a unique yet genuinely human being or a suprahistorical personage of some sort or other. Whatever it may be, there can be no strict impartiality or objectivity. As Gamaliel Bradford says in another connection, "there are simply those who think they are impartial and those who know they are not."<sup>6</sup> The record of historical writing about Jesus makes this self-evident, despite claims to the contrary.<sup>7</sup>

In the light of that, the very least that is consistent with the fact of Jesus' meaning for mankind, the irreducible minimum, was given classic and robust expression by George A. Gordon forty years ago, when he wrote:

It is but homage to reality to confess the transcendent greatness of Jesus, and to study him in any other mood is sheer impertinence. The great teachers of mankind have won the right to our deference. We do not fear to test them; but we fear to test them except in the consciousness of their immeasurable significance.<sup>8</sup>

The validity of this contention is re-enforced by the contrast which the late and honored Frank C. Porter saw so clearly between the natural scientist and the historian. Granting all that they have in common, he yet recognized that the one is dealing with *things*, the other with *persons*. Although historical personages are dead, the personal relationship be-

<sup>5</sup> K. S. Latourette, *Anno Domini*, Harper & Brothers, 1940, p. 227.

<sup>6</sup> *See the American*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1912, p. 270.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. C. C. McCown, *The Search for the Real Jesus*, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940.

<sup>8</sup> *Ultimate Conceptions of Faith*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1903, pp. 261f.

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tween the student and his subject of study is vastly different from the impersonal relationship which exists between the natural scientist and his objects of study. Thus the latter can be excused for taking a condescending attitude toward his materials, but the historian cannot. "The right attitude of mind toward mind, of person toward person, is . . . that of friendliness, respect, good-will," and, when dealing with obviously great persons, even of "reverence and wonder," "humility and discipleship."<sup>9</sup> Thus he viewed knowledge of the past, unearthed by scientific procedures, and "this inward means of sympathy and insight" as working together harmoniously to produce a discriminating interpretation of Jesus.

The importance of this factor is evident when we confront ambiguities in the source materials, and are forced to appeal to creative historical imagination to reconstruct the mind of Jesus. The self-consciousness of Jesus is one of the major problems in this category. Taken as they stand, the Gospels yield a series of statements which are not only incomplete, but often mutually contradictory. In the face of such uncertainty a passive agnosticism may be becoming to the historical student, yet the historian rightly feels that his task is to attempt a valid reconstruction. The record of historical writing at least reveals the attempts of one interpreter after another to solve the dilemma; each attempt represents an act of creative historical imagination seeking to bring dry bones to life. There can be no finality about resulting theories, yet the historical enterprise would die if the effort to solve the problem ceased. This is also the case in regard to other aspects of the Gospel tradition.

In embarking upon the quest of truth by means of creative historical imagination the student needs more than knowledge of Jesus' background and similar materials. He needs a mind predisposed to interpret ambiguities in relation to the general impressions which less equivocal materials present. Actually he confronts an unavoidable choice: that between skepticism and appreciation. Neutrality may in theory be desirable, although that is questionable; in practice it does not exist. The great danger is that of underestimating the stature of the person being studied. As T. R. Glover so well recognized, an appreciative spirit alone is capable of avoiding the underestimating of Jesus and of producing a portrait consistent with the impressions of history concerning Jesus.<sup>10</sup> Skepticism ignores Jesus' impact upon history and the impressions of the

<sup>9</sup> *The Mind of Christ in Paul*, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932, pp. 10f.

<sup>10</sup> *The Jesus of History*, Grosset & Dunlap, Inc., 1917, pp. 18-22.

Gospels themselves, and thus issues in half-truths. Appreciation does not make ambiguous materials less equivocal; it offers no magical short cut to certainty. But it does have the advantage of being more consistent with reality, and thus more likely to issue in a true portrait.

The one condition is that the appreciative spirit be employed in conjunction with, and not condescendingly toward, strict canons of historical study. Faith may supplement this discipline, but it cannot be substituted for the empirical approach. When faith is allowed to qualify empirical procedures, it leads to all kinds of sentimental or theologically bigoted results. It often results in a skepticism of its own which minimizes the achievements of historical study of Jesus, or ignores the Jesus of history, and the norms for Christian faith which are found there, in the interests of a vague allegiance to the Christ of faith. However, when the appreciative spirit is employed within the framework of a theistic-human philosophy of history, which takes seriously empirical procedures and the genuineness of Jesus' humanity, it gives wings to creative historical imagination as it seeks to understand Jesus in the setting of his own day.

That such an attitude is not uncongenial in conjunction with rigid—perhaps radical!—historical criticism is demonstrated by Albert Schweitzer. We may or we may not agree with Schweitzer's interpretation of Jesus in detail, but we at least witness the attempt to deal realistically with Jesus in terms of the thought-forms of the first century at the same time that we observe the interpreter's feeling for the stature of Jesus. Intellectual acuteness and an appreciative spirit are observed working hand in hand to point out Jesus' "overwhelming heroic greatness."<sup>11</sup>

A second fact which the historian must take into account may be considered as an aspect of Jesus' historical influence, yet it deserves separate treatment. It is Jesus' capacity to evoke love or hate upon the part of men. Some have hated him, from the ecclesiastical officials of ancient Judaism to modern Hitlers. Many more have loved him. This takes us beyond the kind of respect which men may feel in the light of his impact upon history; theoretically he could be respected without great affection. In practice, respect and love more often go together. The force of Jesus' personal challenge is of such a nature that he is either hated or loved. The one thing we cannot do is to remain passive in his presence.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. *The Mystery of the Kingdom of God*, trans. by Walter Lowrie, Adam & Charles Black, London, 1925, especially pp. 274ff.

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Thus we are reminded of the truth so well expressed by Gamaliel Bradford, in his biography of Robert E. Lee, that "psychography," the art of painting souls, "to have its richest usefulness, should be based upon love."<sup>12</sup> To be sure, some great observers of their fellow men have hated, although often this hate has been directed not against the subject of study but rather against the stereotyped portraiture of the subject by other interpreters. Bradford was at first repelled by the excessive adoration of Lee's admirers, and some of the most productive writings about Jesus have been the result of a similar hatred of ways in which Jesus had been interpreted.<sup>13</sup> The fact remains, however, that love dominates the mood of the truly great painters of souls. "The very wisest, richest, deepest—Sophocles, Shakespeare, Cervantes—have always loved; sometimes laughed a little, teased a little, mocked a little, but loved always."<sup>14</sup> In his treatment of Lee, Bradford is an excellent example of the spirit he commends.

In bringing this spirit to bear upon the study of the historical Jesus great care must be taken to distinguish between genuine love, sentimentality, and theological bigotry. Sentimentality may be a surface reaction without the backbone which intelligence imparts to response. The greatest danger, however, comes from the tendency to equate petrified theological formulas with appreciation. Genuine love operates in the area of experience; it expresses itself primarily in devotion to the person of Jesus in spiritual and ethical loyalties. It also is expressed in theological formulae; Christological speculation bears mute testimony to the love which men have for Jesus. Yet the formulae which result are always by-products and must never be equated with the experiences which cause them to arise.

When genuine love is present in the mind of the historical interpreter, it does not mean that historical canons of study are qualified. Love cannot be substituted for discriminating analysis of the sources; it cannot take the place of serious efforts to understand the environment of Jesus and to relate him realistically to it. It is not a short cut to certainty when the sources are equivocal. What it can do is to save us from a cynical skepticism which is all too often paraded as objectivity or disinterestedness, when actually it is nothing more nor less than the

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 282.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. A. Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, trans. by W. Montgomery, Adam and Charles Black, 2d ed. reprint, 1945, pp. 4f.

<sup>14</sup> G. Bradford, *ibid.*, p. 282.

inability to love. It is a sort of passion for incompleteness, and may be as flagrantly dogmatic as the most excessive theological bigotry. Love can save us from underestimating the greatness of Jesus, and, positively speaking, it can enable us to interpret him more consistently in line with the marks of greatness of soul and mind which both the Gospels and history testify that he must have had. Love may enhance and exaggerate, but it nevertheless points more certainly in the direction of reality than the smallness of soul which characterizes much moribund skepticism.

A third fact about Jesus is that he was a dominantly religious personality. Without thinking of religion in a compartmentalized manner, we can recognize his absorption with religious things. This means that his interpreter, if he is to understand his mind at all, must possess profound religious sensitivity. This is as obvious as saying that the interpreter of Beethoven must have a discriminating musical mind. Maurice Goguel states the minimum requirement:

A religion cannot be grasped externally like a mathematical formula, (but must be approached) in a spirit of sympathy and comprehension. In order to understand the thought of Jesus we must have or we must acquire the spirit of a Christian.<sup>15</sup>

This means that the person who has responded positively to the religious challenge of Jesus, and who has learned in experience something of his meaning for faith, is equipped to understand his historical mind "from the inside" in a manner not true of him who is indifferent to his challenge, or who reacts negatively to it.

"The spirit of a Christian," however, is not the same thing as "Christian presuppositions" interpreted in terms of orthodox Christological formulae. It is the difference between a qualitative perception which enables one to enter sympathetically into rapport with Jesus' own religious and ethical spirit and mere assent to creedal dogmas, the latter of which may exist without the former. In seeking to understand the quality of mind needed to appreciate Jesus' religious spirit and ideas, it is better to begin at the roots. Religious sensitivity capable of appreciating a mind like that of Jesus is in essence a quality of perception which has little to do with orthodox formulae. It is a qualitative penetration which emerges as a by-product of seriousness of purpose in the quest for ultimate reality. As Jesus put it, the ability to "see God" is derived from purity of heart. This purity of heart in the area of religious and ethical values has much in common with true scientific spirit, with its devotion

<sup>15</sup> *The Life of Jesus*, trans. by Olive Wyon, The Macmillan Company, 1933, p. 215.

to truth. Furthermore, it is a more fundamental thing than commitment to a creed. It is a spirit which is not the monopoly of nominal Christians; the Hebrew prophets had it, and contemporaries like Gandhi possess it. Many Jewish scholars, as their works reveal, can lay claim to it. Not only does it exist outside formal Christianity, but many nominal Christians lack it. Within the Christian church there are degrees of sensitivity to the mind of Christ, and many constantly take the name of God in vain because they are, despite their formal confession of faith, spiritually dead.

Thus it is a false alternative which is presented to us in terms of "Christian presuppositions" or historical skepticism, if by the former term is meant some stereotyped traditional formulation of Christology, or even the confession of the finality of Jesus' revelation of God. Creeds and Christologies come and go, but the Cross and its perpetual challenge to a quality of life remain. Within the framework of the Christian faith a discerning religious awareness is demonstrated far more by our living response to that, than it is by the intellectual formulae which we accept.

As regards the historical quest, therefore, it is better to begin with an emphasis upon the basic quality of religious perception which is not the monopoly of nominal Christians, and which many of them do not possess, however much beyond that we may eventually be led to go in defining the requisite quality of religious responsiveness. It is *religious*, and not theological, sensitivity which is needed, although we may grant the inevitableness of theological speculation and, in its place, its value.

In enlisting the aid of religious sensitivity in historical study of Jesus we must avoid one pitfall. We must not confuse its application to the task of discovering the permanent insights in the Gospels with its place in historical reconstruction. The former is perhaps the end to which historical study is to contribute, and its reason for being, but the historian's perspective is limited to the past. His task is to reconstruct the mind of Jesus as it was expressed in ancient Palestine, and not in the implied directives which it may have for situations today which Jesus did not face. The "peril of modernizing Jesus" is ever with us, and can only be avoided as the historian carefully distinguishes his historical task from the equally commendable, but different, one of portraying the contemporary Christ. This danger will take care of itself, if the historian views the appeal to religious sensitivity strictly within the framework of valid procedures concentrated upon the historical task; it will then join with respect for Jesus' stature to enrich historical imagination and deepen the quality of his historical insight.

If the consideration of these pages be valid, strict neutrality in the approach to the study of the historical Jesus must be qualified in the direction of an appreciative spirit such as has been outlined here. The point to be made is that such a qualification does not constitute disregard or disparagement of a truly disinterested spirit. It simply takes that term to mean what it should mean, namely, the determination to include *all* the facts relevant to historical study of Jesus. Comprehension of this necessity, along with the question of a philosophy of history, is perhaps the most urgent need of interpreters of Jesus today. This applies especially to the biblical scholar, but it is as well a responsibility of every person who essays to interpret Jesus. The least that we can do is to understand the conditions of knowing his mind.

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## The Apostle

GERHARD FRIEDRICH

Wound me—and my blood will run  
Into ruby words.  
Touch them—they will one by one  
Be a flight of birds.

Capture me—and from your hate  
I shall be restored.  
Cast me out—no guard nor gate  
Can withstand the Lord.

Even though a life like mine  
May be sacrificed,  
Everlasting and divine  
Looms the living Christ.

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# Thunder On the Right

WILLIAM HOWARD MELISH

*Mr. Melish presents a timely discussion of "the supreme moral test of Christians of our time"—a challenge to resist the forces making for war with Russia.*

**NORMAN CORWIN**, brilliant radio writer and producer, has recently made a round-the-world journey as the recipient of the Wendell Willkie Memorial Traveling Fellowship. In seventeen countries he interviewed both ordinary and outstanding individuals in an attempt to get a sampling of world opinion as to the possibilities of One World. In a report delivered at Freedom House upon his return, he stated these conclusions:

The reservoir of good will toward the United States, about which Willkie spoke so enthusiastically in 1942, has drained to a dangerously low level. The United States, in the eyes of the rest of the world, is a colossus without precedent and without peer. Whether or not people liked us, they were respectful of our power and our capacity; and they attempted, some of them fearfully, some of them hopefully, to convince me as a listening American, that peace lies not in our stars but in us.<sup>1</sup>

## I

It is hard for the average American to grasp how formidable our country looks to the rest of the world. It is truly "a colossus without precedent and without peer." The fortunes of the last three decades have augmented its power and given it a position in the world where it becomes inevitably the chief determinant of the world order that is being slowly molded. The physical presence of the United Nations in the United States is the simplest witness to this basic truth. All roads literally lead to Flushing Meadows, Lake Success, and the Waldorf-Astoria. The capital of the world is here. This is no accident, nor is it the product of any sentimental attitude toward the American way of life on the part of other peoples. For a ravaged and desperate world, this development stems from stark bread-and-butter necessity in terms of the simplest book-keeping within the contemporary scene. Primarily in terms of finance, industrial output, transport, and food, and secondarily as the temporary sole possessor of the frightful new atomic weapons, the United States sits in the seat of the croupier dealing the cards and calling the play.

<sup>1</sup> *New York Herald-Tribune*, Nov. 9, 1946.

During the war Russell W. Davenport wrote in *My Country* an expression of America's responsibility in future world affairs:

America is not a land of ease.  
 We cannot live upon this soil enwrapped  
 In the sweet safety of cerulean seas . . . .  
 But ever outward over all the earth . . . .  
 We must put forth the products of our birth;  
 Our faith, our laws, the meaning of our will . . . .  
 Put forth, not as in conquest, but to spread  
 Assurance of a world community.<sup>2</sup>

The development of world events has made this poetic dream not merely a visionary possibility but a concrete reality. Even as dreams embodied in fact became both something more and something less than what they were as undefined thoughts and hopes, so this American leadership has come to possess a double character. It is one thing to us; it is another thing to other nations. The speeches of the American delegates before the sections and subsections of the United Nations contain an undoubted measure of idealism, but, because that idealism is associated with, and backed by, the most powerful economy in the world, which by its very nature must reach out and penetrate and mold its surroundings to survive, that very idealism becomes a menace and a threat to weak and struggling peoples enmeshed in the acute problems of postwar reconstruction. It is the simplest and most attractive form of self-delusion for the one possessed of power to stand on the principles expressed and to refuse to make that imaginative transference of the mind which attempts to see oneself as others see one.

An example of this is to be found in the acrimonious debate that took place between Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt and Mr. Andrei Vishinsky over the issue of displaced persons in Europe. In principle, it is easy and persuasive to ask sympathy for those individuals who hesitate to return to their countries of origin, where they will have to adjust to a new social order and political administration to which they are not accustomed; where in many instances they will be closely examined as to their personal past histories and subjected to probationary periods of observation, and where in not a few cases they must face direct disciplinary action for their war activities. In fact, however, this problem of displaced persons cannot be dissociated from the circulation of disruptive and provocative literature in the displaced person camps, which inculcated and nourished fear of the

<sup>2</sup> Reprinted from *My Country* by permission of Simon & Schuster, Inc., Copyright, 1944, by Russell W. Davenport.

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homeland. Nor can it be dissociated either from the proven existence of semimilitary cadres, the close ties which were established between various dissident groups and the military and diplomatic agents of the Western occupying powers, and the calculating propaganda and underground activity of those political and ecclesiastical interests which have been steadily challenging and undermining the new administrations in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia, from which areas many of the displaced persons stem as well as from the U.S.S.R. There is no doubt of these facts, which were stated at length by Mr. Vishinsky in a major address before the United Nations, and were substantially admitted by such a conservative American commentator as Walter Lippmann who scathingly criticized our State Department for waging "defensive diplomatic war by supporting wherever they appear governments, parties, factions, and persons who are threatened, or say they are threatened, or can make out a claim to be recognized as opponents of communism and the Soviet Union." He referred contemptuously to "this heterogeneous collection of unstable governments and of contending parties and factions."<sup>3</sup> A final consideration, which apparently never occurred to Mrs. Roosevelt, is the serious question whether it is in the interest of the United States to protect and harbor the most vocal antisovieteers who are certain to continue their bellicose propaganda and add that much more strength to the forces working for war with the Soviet Union. In brief, the issue of displaced persons, which at first sight seemed so small and simple and obvious as to idealistic solution, is found upon examination to contain within it a mirroring of all the great-power tensions. It remains insoluble on the idealistic level without some larger resolution of conflicting governmental policies.

## II

Last December, the organization of which the writer is chairman—the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, Inc.—held a rally in Madison Square Garden to mark the thirteenth anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. The slogan of the mass meeting was to be "Get Together With Russia." As in four previous years, the Council invited and expected official representation from both the governments involved. On the strength of that expectation, an invitation was extended to the United Nations to send representative delegations to the Garden. In spite of

<sup>3</sup> *New York Herald-Tribune*, Sept. 5 and 7, 1946.

the precedent of the wartime years, our State Department did not consider it appropriate to send a spokesman, although it was known that Mr. Vishinsky, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R., had accepted, and that twenty-four United Nations delegations were to be present, some with their highest ranking personalities. These other nations knew only too well that the state of affairs between the United States and the Soviet Union is the determinant of their own future security and well-being. They were willing to attend a citizens' mass meeting seeking to express the desire of millions of Americans for a policy of amity and reciprocity between the United States and the U.S.S.R. within the United Nations.

Some 16,000 people were in the Garden and the carefully formulated statement of the meeting's purpose, which it was my responsibility to voice, was reinforced by addresses from such eminent Americans as Professor Ralph Barton Perry of Harvard, Attorney-General Robert W. Kenny of California, Dr. Stuart Mudd of the University of Pennsylvania, Mr. Marshall MacDuffie of the U.N.R.R.A. mission to the Ukraine, and Norman Corwin, as well as by messages from such men as Henry A. Wallace, Claude Pepper, Philip Murray, and Joseph E. Davies. What we were asking was a foreign policy in the long-term interests of the American people which would seek a decent, honorable, reciprocal, and equal arrangement with the Soviet Union within the United Nations' structure. We stated bluntly that "millions of people in America are disquieted by the brandishing of bombs, the fleets despatched to troubled waters, the polar flights, the loans systematically granted and withheld, the support given and denied to contending parties in many areas of the world." Every speaker stressed the point so clearly made only a few days before the meeting in the Statement on Soviet-American Relations released by the Federal Council of Churches:<sup>4</sup> that we have to accept the fact of different systems in the world and seek the ways in which they can peacefully and constructively coexist. In my own address, I put the matter in this blunt fashion: "It seems to us that some of those who talk most about defending the American way of life have actually so little trust in it that they do not dare to face the competition of another system. They feel their only chance of its survival lies in the atomic elimination of its competitors. What kind of faith in America is this?" And with reference to many bellicose statements from eminent churchmen, and in

<sup>4</sup> *Soviet-American Relations*, Commission on a Just and Durable Peace, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. 5 cents.

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particular to an utterance of the President of Notre Dame University,<sup>5</sup> I asked: "Is Christian civilization in the West so impotent that it has no other persuasive power than the stockpiling of atomic bombs which one high-placed cleric has called 'the only answer to Russian godlessness?'"

It was exceedingly interesting (and reassuring) to receive one month later a copy of *Izvestia* for December 5 and find a complete description of this mass meeting with the main emphasis for its Russian readers placed on a quotation from my speech, protesting "the deliberate cultivation . . . of the idea that in today's One World different economic systems cannot coexist." Millions of Russian readers know that an American clergyman has spoken out for peace, since *Izvestia* printed my full title.

### III

The ugly truth seems to be that in our own country there are at work certain parallel interests which are not making for peace; in fact, they do not want peace! Unless checked, their propaganda can lead to very terrible consequences. The first of these disruptive groups consists of those larger corporate interests that are motivated by the fear that we are moving toward some form of socialism which will restrict or take away their proprietary and managerial freedom. Socialism is already a fact in the Soviet Union and is at least embryonic in every other country of postwar Europe. To these frightened businessmen, the maintenance of the so-called "free enterprise" system depends upon countering and checkmating the Soviet Union, isolating her and her influence from the rest of the world, denying our people (through monopoly of radio and press) the right of discussing her economic principles and techniques lest we find them attractive, and using American commercial credits and other available sanctions to support all movements, parties, and combinations that seem to guarantee an unrestricted and uninhibited future for American business enterprise. The present political spokesman for this viewpoint is Senator Vandenberg, whose address at Cleveland, Ohio, coupled with the address of Mr. John Foster Dulles before the National Publishers' Association, laid down the lines along which the new Secretary of State, General George C. Marshall, might expect the support of a Republican Senate. It was a complete repudiation of the foreign policy associated with the late President Roosevelt.

The second of these major groups is the Roman Catholic hierarchy,

<sup>5</sup> *World-Telegram*, Oct. 18, 1946. Rev. John J. Cavanaugh at an Oklahoma City anticommunist rally.

who reflect the fear of the Vatican with respect to the spread of Marxist humanism. The position of the Vatican, in the opinion of many analysts, has seriously deteriorated in many sections of Europe and Latin America. This has resulted in a frenetic reliance upon the United States as a Roman Catholic bulwark with the concrete suggestion by no less a personage than Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen that the Vatican move to the United States. It expresses itself also in a new strategic interest in postwar China as the one remaining new field for future Roman Catholic expansion. The elevation of the first Chinese Cardinal and his close association with the Generalissimo are signs in the wind.

I call these two "parallel interests" because they are entirely separate in motivation; yet the striking thing about them is the ease with which they actually intertwine and even merge. It is a disquieting fact that more and more news stories and editorials in the press condemn communism as a menace to Christian civilization and stress Roman Catholicism as the main bulwark of our threatened culture. In the *Journal-American* and the *World Telegram* you will find the anticommunist crusade piloted by such men as Howard Rushmore and Frederick Woltman, who, with George Sokolsky of the *Sun*, have been honored with medals by the Catholic War Veterans for "patriotic services" rendered. Their columns are widely syndicated across the country. In more intellectual papers, such as the *New York Times*, the same process is equally evident. The *Times* was the main channel for the Polish Government-in-Exile's propaganda even as it defended Mihailovic and Archbishop Stepinac. Today no one questions that the Roman Catholic viewpoint appears to a considerable degree in the *Times*. Similarly, it is important to analyze the material regularly appearing in the Luce publications—*Life*, *Time*, and *Fortune*.

The surprising thing about this business, and the new factor of supreme importance to Protestant ministers and laymen in particular, is this fact: that *when economic and institutional interests are in jeopardy, the most deep-seated religious differences are quickly forgotten*; Protestant businessmen easily and swiftly find a common denominator with Vatican spokesmen. Roman Catholic leaders appear to be aware of shifts in religious loyalty among America's leading industrial families and to see their greatest chance of winning leadership in America stemming from this new phase of the economic struggle. Is that the reason why they press the anticommunist crusade to such an extreme? If so, is it not a terrible and desperate gambling with the gospel of the Prince of Peace on the gaming table for the conquest of America? Even if, at this stage of the game, it appears to have a fair chance of winning out!

## IV

Mr. Henry A. Wallace has made the public assertion that until there is a cessation of the manufacture of atomic bombs and the processing of materials for their assembling, with the institution of some kind of international supervision and control, the situation remains potentially dangerous. In the light of the groups I have mentioned, and the propaganda which they openly circulate, the existence of these atomic weapons in American hands can only provoke the most intense suspicions and fears abroad, with those inevitable reprisals, countermeasures, protective devices, and the like, which not only deepen the international tensions but provide pretexts for trouble and play directly into the hands of those self-same groups which have whipped up their own fears and hatreds to the point of blind and irrational madness.

That is why the Protestant leadership of the country has a direct responsibility to mobilize the peace sentiment of its people, especially in the Middle West and the deep South. The membership of its churches is influenced by the newspaper and radio propaganda, but in these areas there is still a backlog of sanity with respect to the peculiar interests of large-scale business or the pretensions of the Roman Catholic Church. Protestantism will not lightly yield its birthright. We want no wave of intolerance or restriction upon the freedom of speech or of worship. What is needed is simply a more outspoken Protestant sentiment for peace, pressing for a national foreign policy based on the interests of our total people, and not the interests of a commercial segment of our people, and certainly not the interests of an international Church-State.

During the recent United Nations sessions I have had some occasion to watch the Soviet leadership at work, and have gained from this experience one impression that may be of interest. It seems to me evident that the Russians are thoroughly informed about the United States, its industry, its press, its political habits, its popular ways of thought. I have the feeling that the thing about us that makes them apprehensive is this (and it is a fear, I should add, that many of us Americans right here at home also share)—that the internal economic condition of this country, should there be an acute depression in the next year or two, would set the stage for a sharp drive to the right and the emergence, in the name of Americanism, of a movement which will be essentially clerico-fascist. They see a handwriting on the wall in the present combination of voices calling for the elimination of all left-wingers and progressives from our government departments, from the trade unions, from the film industry, from the other media of mass influence, and from the pulpits.

The quiet stubbornness with which they have been going about their business at the Waldorf-Astoria, Lake Success, and Flushing Meadows, persistently and unemotionally, suggests that they are not quite sure what the role of the United States in the next few years is going to be. They reckon that we are in unbalance. They logically conclude that no nation can wisely make swift, decisive, or final commitments with the United States at this moment but must work slowly and patiently, testing every point and making sure that the world apparatus being molded and formed cannot be converted into an instrument of American world domination in the event of increasing American reaction.

## V

John Roy Carlson's new book, *The Plotters*,<sup>6</sup> has in it material that every minister should read and ponder. I do not agree with everything in the book. Let me be specific. Carlson's equation of nazism and communism is a bit too reminiscent of the Goebbels technique to be accepted without serious challenge, and his chapter on American Communists is neither accurate nor fair. One has the feeling at many points that he is so eager to avoid any imputation of communist sympathies that he has fallen over backward with respect to the truth in order to protect himself. Apart from these serious reservations, I find his study of native fascism a tremendously important and frightening gallery of America's "hatriots," as he so aptly calls them.

Wrapping themselves in the flag and mouthing all sorts of pious sentiments from a wonderful national tradition, these groups have succeeded in building up a widespread public hostility to Labor, the Negro, the Jew, the Alien, and the Communist. They have created a highly volatile and easily exploited tinderbox of popular prejudice available to some leader of a mass movement, should economic adversity strike the country and provide the cue for a demagogue. This propaganda is not new. It has been flourishing since 1933 and in this period has gained a considerable foothold. Hitler is dead, but the Hitler mind is alive and at work in America. Whether it be in Queens in the Christian Front, in Georgia in the Ku Klux Klan or the Columbians, in Detroit in Christian Youth for America, in Denver in the Gerald Winrods or the Cowboy Springers, in Los Angeles in the readers of such a vicious anti-Semitic publication as *The Broom*, on Park Avenue in the Economic Council, Spiritual Mobilization, American Action, or any of the other reactionary movements now in high gear, this seething mass of emotional prejudice

<sup>6</sup> John Roy Carlson, *The Plotters*. New York, E. P. Dutton & Co., 1946.

is available to any hard-driving and cynical leadership that cares to rally it around him.

The attack on all who want a truly democratic America is spear-headed by the "Un-American Committee" of the House of Representatives, formerly the Dies Committee, then the Wood-Rankin Committee, and now currently going on under the name of the Thomas-Rankin Committee. The support of this outrageous institution which resorts to star-chamber proceedings and unconstitutional witch-hunts, stems from fearful business interests, militant anticommunist Roman Catholic groups, and native fascist elements. Educated people who have read the accounts of this committee's methods as reported by such trustworthy men as Professor Harlow Shapley of Harvard, or Dr. Stephen Fritchmann, Editor of *The Christian Register*, often express amazement that this committee has not been repudiated and abolished by Congress. They do not understand its ramifications. These literally penetrate the nation. This is the real reason why this evil committee cannot be easily dislodged. It is the mouthpiece of a widely prevalent form of "Americanism" which uses the hate slogans of the America Firsters, the Christian Fronters, the white supremacists, the anti-Semites, the anticommunist and antilabor groups, defining everything that is an *extension of democracy* as "red." This committee has direct access to important sections of the press and releases its material in ways which gain instantly a national hearing with no possibility of equivalent redress for its victims in the face of its allegations and slanders.

Today we are watching a curious competition between this committee, the Attorney-General, the President, the United States Chamber of Commerce, and Cardinal Spellman to see who can speak the loudest in favor of cleaning the communists, "fellow travelers," and "disloyal elements" (i.e., those who favor friendship with the Soviet Union and support a social and economic program based on an extension of democracy) out of all government and public offices. No one seems to care whether American democracy itself may be at stake in this process. No one pauses to inquire whether the screening out of all these individuals who believe in some orderly and rational approach to the international and domestic needs of the American people may not render increasingly difficult the solution of our unavoidable social and economic problems. May it not be that in this very process, carried on under such familiar and accepted American slogans, we are witnessing the slow establishment of that very same business and clerical leadership which in European countries has received the odious name of "clerical fascism"? In America,

the criminal elements are still underground and limited in number. They have not emerged en masse as they did in Italy and Germany, but, as Carlson shows in his book all too ominously, they are present in our midst.

The recent executive order issued by the President, calling for the application of "loyalty tests" to some two million employees in the federal service, has frightening implications. It gives to the Attorney-General the power to draw up a list of organizations, membership in which, or mere association with which, shall be deemed sufficient evidence of "disloyalty" to require the discharge of federal employees, or the rejection of applicants for posts in the civil service. There is no court of appeal for discharged or rejected individuals outside of departmental boards of review, in itself a major violation of the basic American principle of the separation of the administrative and judicial functions of government. This executive order makes of the Attorney-General a judge, a jury, and a sheriff, at one and the same time. The President's order calls for the establishment of a master-file in Washington, to be constructed out of the combined records of the F.B.I., the military and naval intelligences, the Un-American Committee of the House, and local police agencies. Does this represent the introduction of the "police state" into America in embryo? Most serious of all, this executive order of the President represents a clear departure from the basic premise of Liberal Democracy as we have known it. In that excellent historical study, *The Age of Jackson*, young Arthur Schlesinger writes:

For Jefferson and Jackson the demands of the future—whatever readjustments they may compel for our government and our economy—will best be met by a society in which no single group is able to sacrifice democracy and liberty to its own interest. . . . Freedom lasts only when it is arrived at competitively. . . . Practical attempts to realize society without conflict by confiding power to a single authority have generally resulted . . . in producing a society where the means of suppressing conflict are rapid and efficient.<sup>7</sup>

By this executive order, a President, who stands supposedly in the great tradition of Jefferson and Jackson, abandons Liberal Democracy and advocates an American Orthodoxy from which there shall be no substantial deviation in the ranks of government. Is not this the very essence of totalitarianism—a required conformity to the standards established by those in power?

The insinuating questions which I have raised are not pleasant to discuss and many will wish to shy away from them because of their im-

<sup>7</sup> Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Age of Jackson*. Little, Brown & Co., p. 523.

plications. It seems to me, however, that they must be raised because they deal with factors in the American scene which are not yet determinative of the future. The very publicity attendant upon such discussion is our best protection. It will help to set into motion the curative values of the many healthy aspects of American life. It is my personal belief, for example, that the publication of Mr. Henry A. Wallace's letter to the President and his subsequent letter to the *Washington Post*, while it cost him his job in the administration, did much to weaken the hands of the "war-now" crowd in the national capital, and clarified the international atmosphere considerably. It was a genuine and important service to the American people, and the explosion of anger and recrimination which it evoked is the best proof of the seriousness and accuracy of the charges. To get other tension points in our national life out into the open before the eyes of the public for critical analysis is a healthy thing. It does not matter who is irritated or chooses to strike back.

In conclusion, I hold that Protestant religious leaders have a special responsibility and duty. Among us there are bound to be many legitimate differences and disagreements as to a political program for the nation. I am not concerned with such differences but with something that I believe underlies them all and brings us together; namely, our religious faith in its relation to American democracy and the democratic process. To my mind, the Christian heritage *as transmitted through the Protestant tradition* is an integral part of our whole democratic outlook and method. As Christians we are not committed to any particular economic system but we are under moral charge to seek a social solution that will provide all the people who make up our society with the greatest possible amount of respect, equality, confidence, stability, security, education, freedom, and opportunity. It is certainly not our business as religious leaders to be spokesmen for corporate industry, and, as Protestants, we are under no obligation to defend the peculiar international interests of the Vatican or that corporative concept of society which is innate in the Thomist philosophy and has found such facile expression in the relations of the Vatican with the various fascist states. We have, on the contrary, a clear duty to make our people aware of these demanding group interests and to help them understand the sources of today's conflicting propaganda, as well as the motives that make for its circulation. Not enough of our people appreciate the way in which economic and institutional self-interest affects and colors the loyalties of the heart and mind.

We have a duty, also, to stress constantly our religious conviction

that this is One World, that there is a place in it for different cultures and economies, and that the atom bomb (or any other form of physical coercion) can never be a substitute for free debate and moral and intellectual persuasion. We must teach our people day in and day out the dangers resident in blind hate and put them on the constant alert against the current purveyors of poison, especially those who wrap themselves up in the American flag. And, lastly, whatever our good church wardens and vestrymen and elders may say, we have got to encourage our people to become informed and to take a greater part in the living democratic process—to stand up and be counted for peace, national well-being, jobs, the end of discrimination, community improvement, and the like.<sup>8</sup>

In the long run the one sure safeguard of our democracy is a thinking and acting people able to recognize and defend its own interests. But note this: here is precisely the point at which the fear-ridden groups of our own day fight the most bitterly and desperately. The one thing they don't want is greater and better-informed public participation in national affairs on a mass basis, because the larger and stronger any such people's movement is, the less controllable it becomes. Dare we place our confidence where the more radical of the founding fathers put their trust—in the good sense of our people and in their ability, when fully informed, to make wise decisions in their own interests? That to me is the essence of American democracy in the best American tradition, and I do not fear any future America in which that tradition is alive and sparking. There will not be an aggressive American Century then, to be defended by force of arms. There will not be any native fascism, whatever its name.

At this juncture I am not finally resolved in my own thinking whether such a people's America will drive sharply to the left or find some "middle way." Perhaps that depends on developments! But of this I am sure: whatever such an America does will be in essence truly American and will reflect that respect for the Christian spirit which lies in America's heart. Such an America will not be ashamed to stand comparison with any other people, culture, or system. It will have its own dynamic to provide the power of persuasion which it now requires to live first and foremost among the competing nations and systems of a changing world.

<sup>8</sup> It was gratifying to read in the *New York Times* (Feb. 23, 1947) that a new interchurch committee of the American Russian Institute, 58 Park Avenue, New York City—comprising sixteen church leaders headed by Dr. Ralph W. Sockman—have issued a strong statement in behalf of co-operation with Soviet Russia for world peace, "the supreme moral test of Christians of our time."

# The Truth That Makes Us Free

ROBERT E. FITCH

*A Christian college dean presents a liberal philosophy of Christian education—would offer students an immersion in a total Christian culture.*

**WHAT IS THE** meaning of a Christian college, and what is the manner of its functioning?

This is a problem which becomes acute in our time as we count the number of colleges which formerly were within the fold of the church, but which have gradually fallen away from their Christian affiliations. It is sharpened by our unhappy realization that there are some institutions which are officially Christian in character, but which have been more successful in preserving the form than the spirit of the faith. That it is a problem of interest even to those outside of the church is dramatized by the efforts of President Hutchins to impose a theological superstructure upon the magnificent amorphousness of the University of Chicago. And that this problem is already at a point of perilous crisis is suggested by those shrill voices, even in traditionally liberal denominations, which cry for some doctrinal discipline over academic affairs. Everywhere there is concern for the problem, and everywhere there is confusion about the principles.

The purpose of this essay is to offer a statement of a liberal philosophy of Christian education. It is as eager to avoid sectarianism as to shun secularism. It is an inquiry into the meaning and manner of a Christian college which should embrace in its nurture the whole rich and varied and exact tradition of Christianity. It is deliberately designed in contrast to recent discussions which propose to make of the Christian faith a fetter rather than a way of freedom.

The text for this essay is one that must be dear to every Christian educator: "If ye abide in my word . . . ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." In the narrowly academic sense, truth is the chief concern of an institution of learning. In the Christian purpose, truth is also a principal concern; but there is, in addition, a concern for that truth which makes men free in character and in conduct as well as in mind.

But what is truth, and how do we come upon it?

## I. FREEDOM FOR TRUTH

If growth in wisdom means anything, let us look first to the pursuit of truth, rather than to the possession of it. For we may be sure that, if we do not guarantee the conditions under which man may pursue the truth, then his possession of it will be but fleeting, uncertain, and false.

So far as concerns the pursuit of truth, let our Christian college stand squarely within the Protestant, democratic traditions of our country. In government, this means that there may be one truth for the whole nation, but no one political party has a monopoly of it. In religion, it means that God's truth is one, but no one church nor sect has sole access to it. In academic matters, it means that we all owe allegiance to a common truth, but no one department of learning has a complete grasp of it.

This theory of truth—Protestant and pluralistic—underlies our faith in freedom of speech, press, assembly, and conscience; our faith in the democratic method of solving problems by consulting all interests and reaching a decision by vote of the majority, while respecting the rights of the minority; and our faith in the importance of allowing each group or individual an opportunity to make a contribution to the growing body of knowledge and skills. It is a charter for freedom of enterprise in the realm of the mind and of the spirit.

The opposite theory of truth—an autocratic, monistic one—has shown its logic in history whenever a church, or a state, has claimed absolute sovereignty over all the activities of man. Its meaning is tyranny and totalitarianism. It assumes that there is one absolute truth; that this truth has been revealed to some privileged individual, or to some class of the elect; that this individual, or class, is therefore warranted in administering the truth authoritatively to other folk regardless of their voluntary co-operation. Communism now illustrates this in government. The Roman Catholic Church illustrates it in religion, when circumstances permit. In the academic world, it would mean, and to some degree has meant, a succession of tyrants: theology in the Middle Ages, physics in the Age of Reason, biology in the nineteenth century, economics until recently, though current intellectual fads now yield the hegemony to political science and to psychology. The pretenders to absolute truth are without end, and every one of them—including theology—blasphemes against God who alone is all truth and knows all truth.

Of course, this pluralistic path we follow in the pursuit of truth has

its dangers. One danger is multiple bigotry: instead of one universal authoritative pattern of bigotry, we get one hundred and one little bigots, each engrossed in his own little sect, or party, or department. This situation arises from an egoistic abuse of the freedom and flexibility that are inherent in the total process. In academic affairs, it means all the evils of narrow departmentalization. In political democracy it is illustrated by persons who believe that no sane individual can support any other party than their own. In religion it shows itself in a dogmatic denominationalism which would deny to other sects any share in the Christian fellowship.

The other danger is a flabby tolerance which has lost all conviction of the objective reality of truth and of right. Just because many paths lead to the truth, it does not follow that all paths lead to it. There are some paths that lead to evil and to error; and it is important to know the signs of them. Why is it that, in our day, we make such a pother over "broad-mindedness" and "tolerance"? They are such stupid virtues! Charity is always greater than tolerance. As for broad-mindedness, history clearly indicates that the narrow mind has made as many significant contributions to progress as the broad mind. And should we forget altogether the deep mind, and the value of the high-minded man?

Pure freedom in any area means anarchy, and the logic of competition under such laissez faire always results, finally, in monopoly and monism. Freedom of enterprise for the mind and for the spirit must therefore have its limits, if that freedom is to be retained. These limits can be set only by a pattern which is sharp enough in its outlines to shut out vice and falsehood, but which is ample enough in its scope to allow free play for every creative impulse in mankind.

One of these limits for us is the tradition of science. This tradition tells us how the world runs. It explains the mechanics of man and of his universe. It has its own flexible yet precise method for the pursuit of truth—a method which is self-correcting in use, and which is as hostile to dogma as it is to error. Science, moreover, has its own discipline in patience, humility, co-operation, honesty, and integrity.

The other limit for us is the tradition of Christianity. This tradition tells us why the world runs. It exhibits the purposes of man and of his universe. When it is taken in the full sweep and scope of its historical manifestations, unrestricted by sectarian prejudices and definitions, then there is no excellent thing in the life of man that it does not embrace, no natural revelation of God in semipagan garb to which it may not be

hospitable, no searing evil nor misleading error that it may not fearlessly examine. Because it is concerned with all the great values of life, it cherishes all that is worthy in literature, in music, in art, and in science—glorifying the noblest achievements of man in society and of the soul in its solitude.

Apart from the limitations imposed by these two traditions, we respect no other restraint upon the pursuit of truth. The claims of economic interest, of party, of race, of nation, of class are powerful but spurious. A surrender to these claims means servitude, not freedom. Only within the two traditions of science and of Christianity do we enjoy a real liberty to pursue the truth.

## II. TRUTH FOR FREEDOM

But what is the truth that makes us free? The freedom of which we have spoken up to this point is an instrumental freedom, a statement of the conditions within which we may find the truth. The freedom of which we speak next is a final freedom, a quality of character which is the spiritual token of those who are already in possession of the truth. Surely this truth which we may not merely pursue, since without the possession of it we cannot truly live, is a religious truth. It is God's truth. And if there is any significant difference between the purely secular institution of learning and the Christian institution, it is that the Christian college is solicitous that its faculty and students should possess this truth and exhibit this freedom.

Now no one dare belittle the magnificent achievements of our secular colleges and universities. Least of all dare this writer, who spent his four undergraduate years at one of the best of them. Nevertheless, there is a difference between sensitivity to the many values of life and communion with the supreme values. As a consequence, the best product of a purely secular education can be a rather sorry sight. He is, of course, a perfect gentleman—trained in scientific method, disciplined by social studies, refined in mind and in spirit by the humanities—a brilliant, sophisticated, witty, urbane, cultured egotist! For it is possible to have intellectual and esthetic culture and, at the same time, to be a coward and, in the deepest sense of the word, a cad.

What do I mean by a coward? I think of one student, before the war, who was distinguished by intellectual brilliance and an unfettered audacity of mind. Yet when he faced the prospect of being drafted and of risking his life on a battlefield, his whole countenance was craven, and all his later behavior was but a series of desperate—and successful

—devices to escape this menace. He was not a professing Christian; he was not a pacifist; indeed, he had no convictions one way or the other about the great conflict. The one unmistakable thing in him, beneath the glittering surface of talents and skills, was the primitive and selfish urge to survive, to protect the integrity of his own ego regardless of the sacrifices that others might make. It may be an un-Christian sentiment, but at the thought of him I can scarcely suppress a rising emotion of contempt for one who cowered before a challenge which lesser men and women than he faced with quiet dignity and courage.

And what do I mean by a cad? I think of a meeting in Southern California of prominent educators, shortly after Pearl Harbor, when there was discussion as to what might be done to save some of our Nisei students for the American way of life. All of the Japanese in the state had been ordered into internment camps, and there were required some little display of courage and some slight suffering of inconvenience to stand out in defense of a few students who were deserving of assistance. The meeting was dominated by one important person, who was very intelligent and very levelheaded about the whole business, but obviously more concerned to maintain his dignity than to help a fellow man in need. With great suavity he argued that we must accept the situation as it is, and that, in effect, we had already done all that could be done. Of course, this important person was not a cad according to the gentleman's code. I am sure that his manners in society were beyond reproach, and that his behavior to his family and to his associates was impeccably courteous. But he was a cad in the Christian's code: too self-contained to stick out his neck just a few more inches beyond the security of his well-starched collar; too tidy in his demeanor to be willing to ruffle his respectability with self-forgetful service.

The truth that makes us free from playing the coward and the cad consists of at least three perceptions. One is the perception that, with due allowance for human freedom, God governs his world for his purposes of justice, righteousness, love, liberty, truth, and beauty. We may flout these purposes—and pay the penalty! It is only when we work in accord with these purposes that we come to a full realization of joy and of power.

The second perception is that man's ultimate character and destiny are spiritual. There is much in us of the vegetable and of the animal, as Aristotle taught long before Darwin. There is much in us also of the purely mechanical, as modern psychologists know. But man does not

fulfill himself as man except in the achievement of humility before God, of awareness of beauty, of sensitivity to other human beings, of faithful devotion to high ideals, and of creative living according to the will of his Maker.

The third perception is of Jesus the Christ. It is in him that we come to know the union of the mortal and of the immortal in us. It is in him that we find the needed Savior and Redeemer, Companion and Friend. And though it may seem that the very best we can do is to follow in his footsteps from afar, and ever and anon to stray from the path, yet at the same time, by the grace of God, he may dwell within us as the living Spirit through which we understand the way, the truth, and the life.

Our world right now is full of fear. It is a striking fact—and it is a fact—that we are more afraid now in peace than when recently we were engaged in a great war. We are afraid of Russia, afraid of the atom bomb, afraid of the next war, afraid of inflation, afraid of depression, afraid above all lest the ignoble ideals we have so cheaply cherished should reveal themselves as the vanities they are. We cannot be free until we are rid of fear. And we shall never be rid of lesser fears until we come to rest in the nobler fear—the fear of God, which is the beginning of wisdom.

To have all intellectual discipline and esthetic culture, and at the same time to undergird it with sufficient conviction so that in the time of trial we do not falter nor fail; to dread the challenges neither of life nor of death; to welcome every opportunity of human fellowship for its pain as for its pleasure; to believe confidently that God rules his world; and humbly to seek to fulfill his image in ourselves—this is to possess the truth that makes us free!

### III. THE SPIRIT AND THE GIFTS

But if this is the truth, and this the freedom, then how do we implement them in the educational processes of a Christian college?

Nowadays, ironically enough, as the colleges enter into a spiritual crisis, we fix our attention upon the mechanics of Christian administration. There should be compulsory attendance at chapel so many times a week. There ought to be the reading of morning and of evening prayers every day. We should see to it that physics and biology, history and economics, literature and languages are taught according to the creedal emphases of Christianity. The college should be under church control, or else

bound to the denomination on a rigorously contractual basis. The officers of the administration and the members of the faculty should be selected only from the ranks of those who are active members in one of the Protestant churches. The college should have a full-time chaplain as a member of its faculty. Each student ought to be required to take so many units in Bible and in Christian history and doctrine.

Now no one denies the importance of the means to an end. Personally, I should say that the last two items listed above represent an absolute minimum in mechanics. What is probably the most important item, however—the selection of a Christian faculty—necessarily calls for delicate compromise and adjustment in a civilization still marked by the divorce between secular learning and Christian discipline. In any case, let us not forget the essential. For an educational institution, Christianity is basically a culture. A Christian college should provide Christian nurture. And there is no aspect of life which that nurture does not touch.

When we think of Christianity as a culture, we are freed at once from the fallacy of fixation upon some one phase of our total religious heritage, and at the same time we see how each phase is a significant facet of the larger Christian enterprise. Of course, there are creeds—not a creed. Of course, there is a Bible, but there is, besides, an extensive sacred literature in Christianity, which is also needful to our nurture. Of course, there is a Life, but there are other Christian lives which are part of the clue to understanding that Life. There is a Church, but it is invisible, and we need a knowledge of all its visible manifestations to catch some glimpse of its greater glory. There are rituals—not a ritual, and our recitation of them will be meaningless unless we, too, know how to pray spontaneously from the heart, as did those who wrote the ritual. There are religious experiences—not a religious experience, and they may be communal and traditional as well as personal and private. There is a Christian ethic, but it is richer than any formula even though that formula bear the magic name of love. There is a Christian social philosophy, which is as intimately related to any current problem and program as it is beyond them in its perspective. There are priests who are the conservators of propriety and tradition, and there are prophets in the power of the Spirit who so often wear an unseemly garb and speak an outlandish tongue. There are Christian music, Christian art, Christian architecture. There is even a Christian science, both in the preliminary sense of a partial identity in moral and intellectual disciplines, and in the larger sense of a science which is the means to ends that are Christian.

The damnable delusion is the notion that any one of these things is a sufficient handle for manipulating the Christian spirit into existence. Suppose we do recite the creed with conviction, does that say anything about our conduct? Suppose we do sing hymns with enthusiasm, does it prove that we can pray in humility? Suppose we are personally pious, does it mean that we are socially just? Suppose we do take part in the functions of our church, does it mean that we have a generous devotion to the needs of our community and our country? The fact is that a baptism of total immersion into a Christian culture calls for an infinite variety of acts and attitudes, of prayings, meditations, appreciations, sharings, aspirations, receivings, sacrificings, doings, believings, doubtings, thinkings, and feelings that call into play the entire personality.

A Christian college which has a care for a total Christian culture will be as one body with many members. It will have the Spirit and the gifts. It will naturally be wary of those narrow specialists, so concerned for its health, who think that, if they can put the head in a brace, they can control which way the feet shall walk; that, if they can regulate certain rituals of the tongue and the hand and the knee, they shall thereby concoct purity of heart; that if they can bind this body to another body by strict bonds of law and of discipline, they do thereby ensure fidelity and love. It will know that all gifts are necessary manifestations of the one Spirit; and that, through whatever mechanisms the Spirit may for the moment do its work, it is still the Spirit and as such unenslaved by any mechanism, for the Spirit is of God. To have this Spirit and these gifts, this freedom and this truth: that is the one thing needful.

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# Jesus' Teachings Concerning the Kingdom

WILLIAM S. HILL

*A study of the parables on "the sovereign and righteous reign of God" in the light of the prophetic and apocalyptic background.*

THE PARABLES recorded in the Synoptic Gospels make it very plain that Jesus' basic concern was with the Kingdom.<sup>1</sup> A third of his similes contain a direct reference to it, and the majority of the others deal with the Kingdom indirectly, pointing out either who will qualify for it, who will be debarred from it, or what traits of character are reflected by those who belong to it. In none of the parables did Jesus say what the Kingdom *is*; his chief concern was to indicate what it *is like*. But his listeners, their minds prepared by the teachings of the great prophets and the later apocalyptic writers, understood that by the word "Kingdom" Jesus had reference to the sovereign and righteous reign of God.

Running through the Old Testament are two major strains, or two basic modes of thought concerning the righteous reign of God. While the belief that "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth" is always apparent, one strain conceives of this reign in terms of *divine judgment* wherein God punishes evil-doers while establishing and rewarding the righteous, and the other sets forth the idea of a *blessed community* of which God is the head, in which the faithful dwell in felicity, and from which the wicked are excluded. At times these two strains are quite distinct, at others they become twisted into a single strand, and at still others they are woven into the bizarre web supplied by angelology together with the notion of heavenly invasions (Ps. 78:49), and cosmic signs (Dan. 6:27).

## I

Beginning with Amos in the eighth century B.C., the great prophets thought of the reign of God primarily in terms of *divine judgment*,

<sup>1</sup> Matthew usually, but not always (cf. Matt. 12:28), uses the phrase "Kingdom of heaven," whereas Mark and Luke prefer "Kingdom of God." The difference is one of terminology; it conveys no distinction of content, though it is possible that Matthew thought of the Kingdom in more apocalyptic or "otherworldly" terms than his co-Synoptists, and thus used the word "heaven" in contradistinction to "earth." Note that in the Lucan version of the Lord's Prayer the phrase "who art in heaven" is omitted. Compare Luke 11:2 and Matt. 6:9.

wherein God's sovereignty was exercised in punishing evil-doers and rewarding the righteous. The prophets thought of this judgment as we today think of the force of gravity—as operating constantly and ineluctably—for not only did they conceive of the Lord as a God of justice, but they maintained that his judgment is continuous, that “every morning doth he bring his judgment to light” (Zeph. 3:5). Though men might be blind to its source—though, for instance, the Amorites might not realize that God had sent them famine to repay them for their iniquities (Amos 2:9), or the Assyrians might remain unaware that they were instruments for the fulfillment of divine justice (Isa. 10:5ff.)—still the judgment of God was thought by the prophets to be as certain and regular as the daily coming of the dawn. “Thus saith the Lord: For three transgressions . . . I will not turn away the punishment thereof” (Amos 1:3); “I will pour out my wrath on them like water” (Hos. 5:10)—this is the prophetic message concerning iniquity. “. . . let us return unto Jehovah, . . . he will heal us” (Hos. 6:1); “Thus saith Jehovah, . . . seek me and ye shall live” (Amos 5:4)—this is the prophetic message concerning repentance and righteousness. As envisaged by the prophets, the divine judgment was expressed exclusively in terms of worldly, or temporal, rewards and punishments: the blessings of the righteous man included long life in the promised land, many children, and abundant crops and herds, whereas the punishment of the wicked consisted of physical suffering, pestilence, childlessness, famine, and exile. The punishment of exile, as contrasted with a long life in the promised land, shows that to the prophets the notion of a “blessed community” was inseparably linked with the idea of Israel as a geographic and political entity, and thus a part of man's reward for righteousness consisted of his inclusion within the earthly community of the Israelites. Though in their writings there are some evidences<sup>2</sup> that the prophets considered the ultimate purpose of divine judgment to be the glorification of Israel as a nation, it is clear that the main prophetic concern was not with a blessed community of men, but with the righteousness and continuous judgment of God.

Coming into prominence in the late Persian Period in Hebrew history (538-332 B.C.), and continuing their activity until well after the time of Christ, a group of writers advanced a view of divine judgment not as continuous and constant but as being held in abeyance until a special

<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah 16:15b, Micah 7:20, etc. These and similar passages do not, however, carry much weight, for they are in all probability apocalyptic additions.

"Day of the Lord" (Joel 1:15, Zech. 12:3, etc.). Because they claimed to be in possession of truth not revealed to other men, these writers are known as apocalyptists,<sup>3</sup> and though they differed as to the precise manner in which the day of the Lord would begin, they were in unanimous agreement that it would come in a cataclysmic fashion, perhaps ushered in by an angelic invasion from heaven (Dan. 12:1) and accompanied by all manner of geological disturbances (Isa. 34:4, Joel 3:18, etc.). On that day, so the apocalyptists taught, Jerusalem would be raised up (Zech. 14:10) and with it many of the dead who up to that time had lain in the dust of the ground (Dan. 12:2); there should then follow a grand assize wherein God would judge all men and nations, consigning some to "shame and everlasting abhorrence" and including others within the blessed community whose existence is eternal, whose center is Jerusalem, and whose head is God himself. While preserving the prophetic notion of divine judgment as bringing sorrow to the wicked and joy to the righteous, the apocalyptists pushed the operation of that judgment into the future, at the same time placing their chief emphasis on the idea of the blessed community which to them was no mere earthly, political company, but rather a transformed, otherworldly Israel, comprising those whom God had adjudged righteous.

## II

Depending upon their training or personal predilections, the listeners of Jesus belonged to one or the other of these two schools, conceiving of the reign of God either in prophetic or apocalyptic terms. The parables reveal that Jesus himself was mentally hospitable to certain elements in both views; it is significant that in half of the parables dealing directly with the Kingdom he phrased his conceptions in apocalyptic language, and in the other half gave a portrait of the reign of God clearly in keeping with prophetic presuppositions.

On the prophetic side, Jesus spoke of the reign of God as continuously functioning, like leaven working in meal (Matt. 13:33) or as a seed growing in the earth by itself (Mark 4:26-29); none of his parables suggest that he agreed with the apocalyptic contention that God is holding his judgment completely in abeyance, or has temporarily withdrawn from exercising any sovereignty over the affairs of men; according to Jesus, whatever God might do in the future, he is also at work in the present. On the apocalyptic side, however, Jesus spoke of the final judgment when

<sup>3</sup> The word "apocalypse" means literally an "uncovering," hence it connotes "revelation."

"shall be gathered all the nations of the earth" (Matt. 25:31-46), and likened the arrival of the Kingdom to a lightning flash (Matt. 24:27) or to a thief coming in the night (Luke 12:39). Moreover, in keeping with the mood of the apocalyptists, he repeatedly enjoined watchfulness, stating that men know "not the day nor the hour" (Matt 25:13) of the Kingdom's advent.

While from the parables it is possible to dissect out and to separate the prophetic and apocalyptic conceptions of the reign of God, the parables taken together reveal that in the teachings of Jesus these two strands merge to form a new and in some respects unique view of the Kingdom.

Basic to his conception of the reign of God, as to that of both prophet and apocalypticist, was the firm and often-expressed belief in an inevitable *divine judgment*, for according to Jesus the reapers are instructed to "gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them" (Matt. 13:30), the unfruitful fig tree is cut down (Luke 13:6-9), the unpalatable fish caught up in the drag net are cast away (Matt. 13:48), those who murdered the king's servants are killed and their city burned (Matt. 22:1-14), and those bereft of humanitarian sympathies suffer eternal punishment (Matt. 25:46). As one, however, who often would have gathered the children of men together, "even as a hen gathereth her brood" (Luke 13:34), and as one who taught that it was God's desire that not a single little one should perish (Matt. 18:14), Jesus did not want men to be punished for their misdeeds and excluded from the blessed community; rather he desired that becoming faithful servants they should "enter the joy of their Lord" (Matt. 25:21). Believing that the Kingdom rightfully deserves man's highest loyalty and devotion, he portrayed it in terms of its supreme worth, both as to practical value and as to infallible contribution to human happiness. Pointing out that the Kingdom was as money<sup>4</sup> hidden in a field for which a man would exchange all of his possessions, Jesus suggested that the reign of God is of definite practical utility to man, and by comparing it with a "pearl of great price" (Matt. 13:46) he intimated that as a thing of beauty it would redound to the glory and adornment of personality.

Where Jesus most obviously combined prophetic and apocalyptic elements in his view of the reign of God was in his conception of the *time* at which the divine judgment did or would take place. From the prophets

<sup>4</sup> The word *θησαυρῶν*, in Matt. 13:44, usually translated as "treasure," is taken here to mean "money." Cf. the parable of the lost coin, Luke 15:8-10.

he took over the idea that divine justice operated constantly, in the manner of a seed growing in the ground, and from the apocalyptists he borrowed the notion that the full finality of God's judgment would take place at some time in the future. The parables indicate that Jesus made a distinction between the final judgment passed upon the individual and the reign of divine justice which, bursting in upon the historic process, would affect humanity as a whole: for the individual the last judgment comes at the moment of death, when his soul is "required this night" (Luke 12:20), and for those remaining upon earth it occurs at that moment when all men, the wicked and righteous alike, are inescapably confronted with God's sovereign justice. It is important to emphasize Jesus' insistence upon the *finality* of the last judgment. Whether it comes at death or in the historic process neither the individual nor humanity as a whole is granted another chance; the unprofitable are cast into outer darkness (Matt. 25:30) and "the door is shut" (Matt. 25:10, Luke 13:25). It appears that Jesus thought of God's day-by-day judgment as educative in purpose, intended to teach men that they must change their way of life before the advent of the final assize makes any further changes impossible. In any case, constant watchfulness is a prime requisite, for just as a man cannot tell at which hour he will die, permanently renouncing his opportunities to become "rich toward God" (Luke 12:21), so also is mankind unaware of the moment at which the complete earthly fruition of the reign of God will take place. Thus any relaxation of vigilance, or any attitude that "my Lord delayeth his coming" (Luke 12:45) is likely to have disastrous consequences.

As for the cosmic, eschatological "day of the Lord," the parables indicate that Jesus thought of it, not so much as coming in an apocalyptic fashion, with a host of angels or some heavenly messiah riding upon the clouds, but rather as making its appearance in a more natural, less spectacularly bizarre, manner. In other words, many of his similes suggest that Jesus borrowed apocalyptic terminology to make graphic his conceptions of the Kingdom's advent, but actually believed it would begin, not at a time of a heavenly invasion, but rather at some moment in the historic process when all men would suddenly come to realize that God is sovereign and his judgment ineluctable. Jesus likened the Kingdom's growth to a mustard seed which, at first of infinitesimal size, in time produces something visible to all (Mark 4:30-32); in the parable of the disciple and the teacher he affirmed that "there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known" (Matt. 10:26);

and when to these parables is added his observation that "a city set on a hill cannot be hid" (Matt. 5:14), it becomes possible to affirm that Jesus thought the Kingdom would begin at the moment of mankind's mental and spiritual awakening when, coming as a lightning flash, a cosmic rebirth of human understanding would make clear to all the sovereignty of God.

### III

As for the "blessed community," the parables indicate that Jesus conceived of it in two ways: as the heavenly company to which the righteous are admitted after death (Luke 16:22), and as the assembly of the faithful coming into being in the historic process once the reign of God becomes fully manifest upon earth. To Jesus, the greatest punishment inflicted upon the unrighteous was not physical suffering and death, inevitable as they were, but the even greater anguish of enforced exclusion from the company of the blessed. The vineyard tilled by wicked husbandmen is given to others (Mark 12:9b), the provoked host says "that none of these men that were bidden shall taste of my supper" (Luke 14:24), and in the outer darkness where the unprofitable servant is cast there are "weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 25:30b). Incidentally, there is no doubt that in the mind of Jesus the Kingdom, or the blessed community, was not something for men to bring about by their own efforts; it was for them to get into, and it was thus their duty to exercise constant vigilance so that at the time of the Kingdom's advent they would be found worthy.

Though the parables show that Jesus thought of the community of the blessed both as an angelic community in heaven and an assembly of the righteous on earth, it must be remembered that in the parables we can find no sharp distinction between the "worldliness" of the prophetic judgments and the "otherworldliness" of the divine justice envisaged by the apocalyptists—the diligent servant, for instance, is given the "worldly" reward of authority over ten cities (Luke 19:17), whereas the righteous beggar is given the "otherworldly" compensation of being carried into Abraham's bosom (Luke 16:22). It is possible to assume, then, that in the mind of Jesus the notions of a heavenly and of an earthly blessed community are merged into one, but just how this merging is accomplished the parables do not say. Furthermore, there is in the similes of Jesus no identification of an earthly or even a spiritually transformed Israel with the community of the faithful: the Kingdom would be given to "the nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matt. 21:43).

Jesus envisaged the possibility that he might be rejected by men and that the people whom he had come to prepare for the Kingdom would have no desire to submit to his teachings. In his parable of the rejected king (Luke 19:12, 14) he spoke of those subjects who said of their monarch, "We will not that this man should reign over us," and in other similes he spoke of the human tendency to follow blind guides (Luke 6:39) and to trust false prophets (Matt. 7:15) while turning away from wise and discriminating leaders. But while he never lost sight of the chance that men might reject him, it is nonetheless plain that Jesus considered himself to be both God's messenger making the people ready for the Kingdom and the divinely appointed instrument to usher in the Kingdom itself.

In the famous parable of the soils (Mark 4:3-9) it is clear that the sower is Jesus himself planting the word of God in men's hearts as a farmer puts seeds into the ground. Moreover, Jesus showed a revealing insight into the purpose of his work when, replying to the charge that he dined with people of questionable reputation, he said, "They that are in health have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Luke 5:31-32). The preparation of individual men to pass the bar of divine judgment and to enter the community of the blessed after death, however, was only one part of his mission; the other part, so he believed, was to usher in the world-wide final assize. Pointing to the budding fig tree as a harbinger of summer (Mark 13:28), to clouds and wind as heralding an approaching storm (Luke 12:54-57), and to a ruddy sunset as portending fair weather (Matt. 16:2-3), Jesus suggested the signs of the beginning of God's reign, and indicated that chief among these signs was his own life and work. In his parable of the vineyard and the husbandmen (Mark 12:1-10) Jesus acknowledged the work of the prophets—whom he likened to the emissaries that were beaten and stoned—but he left no doubt that he was the vineyard owner's "son and heir," and as such had come to give the people their last chance to turn from evil and to embrace righteousness before the Kingdom's advent. Furthermore, in the story of the divided house he made the assertion: "If I by the finger of God cast out demons, then is the Kingdom come upon you" (Luke 11:20) and went so far as to suggest that he was himself going to bind and fetter Satan that he might despoil his house, end his rule, and pave the way for the coming reign of God (Matt. 12:28-29).

While the idea that Jesus himself would usher in the Kingdom is

unique, it can be said by way of summary that in his teachings concerning the realm of God, Jesus affirmed the major thesis common to both prophetic and apocalyptic writers: *God is sovereign*. His righteous reign is to be reckoned with. And divine justice, granting to the faithful a bountiful reward and to the wicked the double punishment of actual suffering and exclusion from the blessed community, will ultimately prevail.

It is plain that the view of the reign of God set forth in the parables lends no support to the shallow humanitarianism which would usher in the Kingdom by teaching everyone to be a little more kindly toward everybody else, but neither can it be used to heighten the disquieting fear that this planet is going to disappear in a chain reaction of atomic fission. Quite the contrary; the parables remind us anew that the Kingdom is not man's, but God's—and that its fruition is something quite beyond man's power to add or detract.

Moreover, Jesus' teachings concerning the Kingdom reveal a basis neither for optimism nor pessimism concerning the future of the human race; what they make clear is that if man lives in accord with the basic principles of the Kingdom he will enter into the joy of his Lord (Matt. 25:21); if not he will be cast into outer darkness (Matt. 25:30). In a word, his faith depends upon how he exercises his power of choice. Thus to every individual and nation, speaking through the parables, Jesus says in effect: "Though not yet come to its full fruition, the righteous reign of God is already here, operating as ineluctably as the law of gravity. Whether you become a part of this reign or are excluded from it, is up to you. If you want to enter, repent ye. For the Kingdom is at hand!"

# Finland and Poland After One Year of Peace

FRANKLIN CLARK FRY

*The President of the United Lutheran Church in America tells what he learned from a visit to these two countries—in many respects contrasting, but threatened by a common danger.*

EARLY LAST JULY three of us set out for Finland and Poland and it is to those two nations that I would take you. They proved to be an interesting combination, because in many respects they are as different as they could well be. The abrupt contrasts in themselves helped to make the impressions vivid.

Finland is the rugged, orderly, civilized outpost of evangelical religion set out farthest to the east, and has been ever since the Reformation. It is self-consciously a bastion of Western democracy and culture. Poland, although in no more than equal juxtaposition to Russia, on the contrary belongs conspicuously to the other world; you can smell it in the air and read it in the very stolidity of men's faces. Always distinct, it is now almost the antithesis of everything in which we feel at home. The tense current struggle is between Roman Catholicism, of such an alien and fanatical cast that it awakened no chords of sympathy in me at all, and a crass, contemptuous, conniving communism.

Yet contrasted as they are, we found the struggle of these two countries complementary in a kind of inverted way. A survey of them can have a beating rhythm. I shall not attempt to sharpen it for you to an extreme but it is there. The Russian shadow is over them both, but beneath it there are in each a different temperament, ethos, dream, faith.

## I

In Finland you have to go far north to find the crushing physical devastation of war. It exists only up in the sparsely settled regions of Lapland. The cities which we visited are virtually untouched. It was in the final spasm of the war that the retreating German army, withdrawing toward the Atlantic coast under the pursuit of the Russians, scourged the land with the most thorough scorched-earth methods. The Finns still sigh with a kind of amazed admiration at the *Gruendlichkeit* of the whole operation. Every telephone pole for 200 miles, so we

were informed, was sawed off almost level with the ground. Who else would have taken such pains? Thanks to the inexhaustible timber of that arctic land, a rude reconstruction has already made progress. The only permanent casualties may be the churches. Amazingly for that frontier land, they were massive and of cathedral proportions. The Finns were accustomed to erect only one to a county, and especially on festival days all men streamed unto it as Micah prophesied that the nations will do to the mount of the Lord in the last times. On less exciting Sundays, to be sure, the staunch pietistic faith of the provinces was nurtured in the peasants' homes around the fringes of each parish, and indeed dotted all through it; the imposing sanctuaries were three-fourths empty.

According to Archbishop Lehtonen's estimate, not a single one of these monumental churches can be rebuilt for less than a quarter million dollars. The Church of Denmark has hinted that it may finance one to commemorate the age-old Scandinavian fraternity that binds those two nations. But that will be all. With the conservatively estimated needs of the Finnish Church and its people calculated at \$2,800,000 and with only one million dollars available from the Lutherans of America to supply them, even the Finnish ecclesiastics are reconciled that the old ideal of great fanes in the wilderness is dead.

Outside of Helsinki, which we did not visit, the cities of Finland are hardly bomb-pocked at all. They are fascinating with their oscillation from block to block between venerable structures like St. Henry's Cathedral in Turku from the thirteenth century to the most handsome structures of functional modernistic architecture that any of us had ever seen. The breath-takingly beautiful mortuary Chapel of the Resurrection in the city cemetery still makes me exclaim, as does a captivating brilliant white church with a pastel frieze not too far away. Provincial Americans caught themselves suspecting that our own most imaginative architectural geniuses and skilled construction engineers had started over there ahead of us.

The awful blight upon Finland is in its toll of human life. One-sixth of all of the adult males in the land are dead, eighty thousand of them. In every village the magnet to which we were drawn was the skinned, compact and yet wide-reaching parish cemetery with its dense thicket of black granite tombstones from both the winter war of 1940-41 and this last catastrophe. The graveyards of Finland are an obsession and they exert a morbid fascination upon almost all who survive.

If it was the slaughter of the most gifted minds and glowing spirits

of youth in 1914-18 which accounted more than any other factor, as I believe it did, for the deterioration between the two wars; if it was that which cleared the way for the perverts and degenerates to seize the places left vacant by the flower of a generation, then what of Finland to the north?

If in Poland, as we shall see after a moment, the most chaotic problems arise from the acquisition of new territories, it is the terrific reverse north of the Baltic Sea. Finland today is almost submerged under a tide of refugees from its richest and most populous eastern province, Karelia, which has now been irretrievably ceded to the Soviet Union. One-tenth of the arable land was there, a massing of industry, 450,000 out of a population of four million, and—what was most disastrous of all religiously—the heavy preponderance of church institutions. The only specialized Bible-printing house in the nation was there, hospitals with hundreds of beds for epileptics, the paralyzed, and others, the most extensive deaconess motherhouse, a training institute for nurses and matrons of homes, a sparkling and blessed general hospital. What tragedy that this staggering loss was concurrent with a nearly fatal need for Christian compassion and social skills!

Finland has rationed poverty, to use a now familiar phrase, more stringently than any other nation in Europe has voluntarily done so. First, all the government lands were appropriated for the expellees. Simultaneously all church lands, aside from the houses of worship and parsonages themselves, were sequestered. Finally, everyone who owned a tract larger than is required for bare subsistence is compelled to deed over every acre above the irreducible minimum to the wanderers from the east or to returned soldiers. If any farmer will not do so, it is done for him by state authorities for only a fractional compensation. The glory of it is that not one of us heard even a single murmur about it. The church, which was heavily dependent upon the revenues of its forests and tilled meadows in the past, has become emaciated with poverty. Bishops are reduced to a compensation of sixty dollars a month and parish priests to forty. They must sell their personal treasures, pianos, silver, even books, piece by piece for survival, with only bleakness ahead. All have a stern determination that the refugees must live.

Over all hangs a pall from the threat of atheism. Godly Christians look at the surviving temples of their faith and shudder with dread at the peril that they may become antireligious museums or entertainment halls. Only a gallant few do not flinch at the meager present with only

foreboding for a future. Bishops and clergy of the ecclesiastical board confess somberly that such a depression of spirit has spread among Sunday-school teachers that too many stumble now in their conviction that it is God's will for them to continue. Hardihood is required for men to be pronounced Christians when they know that this in itself may mark them out for harsh persecution if the flood of the godless should eventually overwhelm the land. The spectre of the related Baltic nations is as bleak as a portent to the south.

With all my heart I give tribute to the steadfast, unyielding disciples of Jesus Christ who still refuse to let their depressed hearts slacken their zeal. It is God who wills to do in them according to his good pleasure, his Holy Spirit who will not be bound. Irrationally—when does not true Christianity earn that adverb?—an almost grim Christian awakening still spreads in that north. Fifteen thousand peasants assembled for a religious encampment in middle Finland during the past summer: five thousand youth in another locality. The church seems overcast but it has a vitality that is unconquerable.

The Word they still shall let remain  
Nor any thanks have for it,  
He's by our side upon the plain  
With his good gifts and spirit.

## II

In Poland, by way of antithesis, it is not the frontier, the remotest frozen regions, that are irretrievably smashed. It is the once handsome capital city itself, which to the highest degree has been the distillation of all the culture and the wealth of Poland in the past. The wreck of Warsaw is unimaginable. It is honestly stunning. With the surrounding rural districts and even smaller industrial cities relatively unscathed, all the fury of a vengeful and at the end maniacal enemy was loosed on the central city.

The ghetto there leaves the most ineffaceable memory. Once a city of 450,000 souls, it was walled about during the earliest days of the occupation and progressively depopulated into the slaughter camps to the west. The final, despairing insurrection, while the Russians callously camped on the far side of the shallow Vistula day after murderously bloody day, was the signal for the most fantastically thorough pulverizing of a city in modern Europe. Only the Americans could achieve the like with their atom bomb. Literally and soberly I did not see two bricks adhering to

each other in that whole vast desert of ruin except for a Roman church which was partially spared.

Our own Lutheran institutions, which were naturally our prime concern, fared as disastrously. Our wealthy Central Church in Warsaw actually possessed seventeen of them, eleemosynary and educational, before this last catastrophe stripped it bare. Certain wings of its renowned Protestant Hospital could possibly be salvaged if there were any incentive—but there isn't. There is not a human habitation within miles of it any more. Where a sturdy and comfortable home for its deaconess nurses stood beside it, last August there was only a yawning crater in the earth. The receiving home for defective children, the home for infants, and the orphanage are simply loose brick. They have disappeared that completely from the face of the earth. Others like the home for the aged and the 200-year-old secondary schools for boys and girls survive only in jagged fragments of their walls.

Even the Lutheran cemetery was not spared, largely because the white Polish rebels had secretly singled it out for their arsenal. Every one of its family vaults and small mausoleums was stuffed with machine guns, and grenades, and rifles. On the frenzied first day of the revolution, just as the pastor loci Michaelis had concluded a funeral service, at a prearranged signal the underground army swarmed in, the doors of the burial vaults were pried open. Rude hands seized the concealed weapons and all hell broke loose. Encouraged by that much desecration of the once hallowed ground of the cemetery, vandals have since sliced into almost every casket and ripped a jagged gash through the metal lid at the face level so as to be able to knock out all gold teeth from the corpses.

On the second anniversary of the frantic and fatal day of uprising, the first of August, I stood in the round hollow shell of the once splendid Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, preached, and thereafter knelt in the dust for the Holy Communion. Bishop Jan Szeruda calls it mournfully "our colosseum." The ornate wooden roof which crowned it was burned off during the earliest bombardments of Warsaw. Later everything—its three galleries, its magnificent chancel, even its floor—were crushed and blown away. Only the ring of brick walls remains with small trees already sprouting from the mortar and no ceiling but the sky.

If Finland is pathetically impoverished because of the loss of one of its provinces, Poland is almost equally chaotic because of its annexation of three. The unconscionable, really criminal decisions at Potsdam have not only outraged all our own pretensions to justice and have doomed

Germany to what appears to many of us to be an insoluble crisis, but they have even plunged Poland into confusion. It is not that the Poles, fanatical nationalists as they are, do not like it. They do, and they beligerently resent anyone whispering any dissent. Brutalizing and disintegrating factors even in the victorious nations are nevertheless plainly to be seen.

With the ruthless expulsion of millions of Germans, thousands of Protestant churches, most of them formerly of the Prussian Union, have been abandoned, their congregations wholly gone. The irony of it! In a Europe where there is a famine of churches, off toward the east there are once populous and flourishing provinces where there is a grotesque surplus of them. As for myself, I cannot share in the bitter, angry denunciations of the Catholics because they have appropriated these empty, orphaned sanctuaries. Practically the entire new immigration consists of Roman communicants, remember, who have themselves been uprooted in the former eastern fringes of Poland, now curiously almost forgotten. Those are the regions which the Russians have deeded to themselves. As the eastern Poles were thrust out on their own painful and dejected trek to the west, they were promised the equivalent of their homes and farms and churches in the glittering new territories which had been acquired from Germany. The properties which they have now seized seem only an equal compensation to them. Let the deluded conscience of America realize that the atrocity is not the fate of Silesia's, Pomerania's, and East Prussia's church buildings, but of their forlorn and perishing people.

Finally, may I venture an observation full of foreboding about the future of the Protestant churches of Poland? Thanks to the expulsion of almost everyone with any Germanic taint, our own Lutheran Church has been drastically reduced from 470,000 to at most 120,000 communicants. Forty-six of its prewar roll of almost exactly one hundred Polish pastors endured the rigors of concentration camps. Twenty-one perished there. Our extremest hope is to preserve what remains. Other Protestants, who are more aggressive, may be excited at the prospect of a dramatically rapid expansion. Viewed from an historical perspective, that happened after World War I and it came to an ignominious collapse. The attempted conversion of the Polish masses was too closely tied to the doling out of relief packages then, and I saw ample evidences to arouse my suspicion that the same thing is happening again.

Altogether, the Protestants will be most imprudent if they allow

their friendship to be captured by the delusively generous attitude of the present Polish government. It is odd that so many do not see, it looks as if they almost willfully do not see, that Protestantism is being adopted as a natural ally by the communists. It does not require any acute powers of deduction to be convinced that the communists and leftist elements in Poland recognize the Roman Church as their only formidable foe. If we can be seduced to help to break it down, when the day arrives when the Catholics seem sufficiently weak, the godless will strike to sweep the board clean of all religions with one devastating stroke.

If only human forces were in the scales in eastern Europe today, in Finland or Poland, we might well be filled with premonition. Among the portentous events of today faith in God is not an elective. It alone gives substance to hope in our hearts and makes a valiant faith credible among our brethren. Fear not, only believe!

# Thomas Hardy's Disbelief\*

NORVIN HEIN

*An understanding of the root of Hardy's pessimism, and that of many who are akin to him, suggests the answer to such dark views of life.*

IN EVERY minister's community there is a Thomas Hardy today. And his kind is not likely to decrease. As our age of war continues to bring in its harvests of misery, this question rings louder in the ears of the church: "How can you prate on about your 'Heavenly Father'—in a world like this?" If Christians are not content to dwindle to the status of a small circle of peculiar optimists, they must prepare to meet this objection with sympathy and insight. It was the lack of a satisfying reply to this question that led Hardy—and many others—to abandon their Christian belief. His eminence as spokesman for the gloomy modern view of things makes it worth our while to try to meet him on his own ground. If we can get to the causes of his melancholy we may learn much about how to grapple with prevailing types of doubt.

## I

Once, when the sun of orthodoxy was higher, churchmen felt little need of pondering over the motives of unbelievers. Doctrinal aberration was often looked upon as a particularly satanic form of perversity, to be dealt with by direct censorious attack. Thus Hardy came in for a good deal of indiscriminating abuse from the ecclesiastical reviewers of the last century. His rebellion against faith was put down to the most discreditable of causes: that he blasphemed for bravado's sake, and splashed in moral sewers for the love of filth.

Whatever effectiveness such virulence may have had at one time as a way of exerting pressure, nowadays it arouses more sympathy for the disbeliever than for the one who attacks him. Furthermore, to charge a man like Thomas Hardy with braggadocio is unjust. Hardy was not a swashbuckler; he did not glory in his disbelief, he did not attack believers; rather he felt a wistful regret that he could not share their hope:

\*The selections from Hardy's poems quoted in this article are all from *Collected Poems of Thomas Hardy*, 1940, and *The Dynasts*, 1931, published by The Macmillan Company. Permission for their use is kindly given by The Macmillan Company; also by Harper & Brothers for use of selections from the section "Wessex Poems."

I am like a gazer who should mark  
 An inland company  
 Standing upfingered, with "Hark! Hark!  
 The glorious distant sea!"  
 And feel, "Alas, 'tis but yon dark  
 And wind-swept pine to me!"<sup>1</sup>

The subsequent stanzas ask the sympathy of those who know the peace he cannot feel, and protest that he no more refuses to believe than a bird with a broken wing refuses to fly. Hardy is quite aware of the values of Christian belief; its attractiveness is not what he calls into question.

How sweet it was in days far hied  
 To start the wheels of day with trustful prayer,  
 To lie down liegely at the eventide  
 And feel a blest assurance he was there!<sup>2</sup>

The poet never implies that the Christian idea of God is repugnant to him; rather, that it is too beautiful a dream for the sad realities of this world, and that we have clung to it only because of our need of solace:

Till, in Time's stayless stealthy swing,  
 Uncompromising rude reality  
 Mangled the Monarch of our fashioning,  
 Who quavered, sank; and now has ceased to be.

So, toward our myth's oblivion,  
 Darkling, and languid-lipped, we creep and grope  
 Sadlier than those who wept in Babylon,  
 Whose Zion was a still abiding hope.<sup>3</sup>

The unhappiness of his disbelief is the seal of Hardy's sincerity. Men do not embrace painful ideas for interested reasons. It is a genuine world-view which he gives us, honestly formed in the struggle of a sincere mind with the problems of life. No traditional pressure methods are a proper reply to him, nor any stock theological arguments which do not approach the difficulty from his own point of view. We can be of no help to such a man until we take the trouble to begin with him at the starting-point of his thinking, find why he rejected the Christian outlook, and discover where and how he might reasonably have taken another turning.

So many individual revolts against Christianity have been stirred up by the absurdities and hypocrisies of church people that it is reasonable to look first into Hardy's contact with religious institutions and discover whether the relationship was marked by any special unpleasantness. Such

<sup>1</sup> *Collected Poems*, "The Imprecipient," p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, "God's Funeral," p. 308.

information as we possess regarding his earlier years provides nothing to indicate any irritation at the church. His father and mother—persons of average attitudes and opinions—gave him a conventional religious training. We judge by certain of his poems that the religious ideas with which he was indoctrinated in church school must have included a rather simple belief in a providential order, an assurance that the world is dominated by justice, and—perhaps especially characteristic of established churches—a confidence in things as they are. It was only later in life that he spoke ironically of such faith:

Their dawns bring lusty joys, it seems;  
 Their evenings all that is sweet.  
 Our times are blessed times, they cry;  
 Life shapes it as is most meet,  
 And nothing is much the matter . . . .<sup>4</sup>

Thomas Hardy's father was a stonemason who did a good deal of work on rural churches. Hardy as a youth took an interest in his father's occupation, and in his young manhood became a very successful church architect in his own right. His work gave him occasion to become acquainted with many of the country churches of his part of England. There is evidence that he had deep feeling for them as edifices; and his nostalgia for the confident beliefs of his childhood indicate that there was a time when their teachings, too, had real meaning for him. He has given us little reason to suppose that his revolt was brought about by any acute dissatisfaction with the life and practices of the church.

This is not to say that he was not aware of certain shams of clergymen and congregations. In *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* he speaks of Sunday as "this day of vanity, this Sun's-day, when flesh went forth to coquet with flesh while hypocritically affecting business with spiritual things . . . ." He points out parishioners who "rested . . . on their foreheads as if they were praying, though they were not." In one satirical poem he catches a minister practicing his most soul-stirring gesture before a mirror. We meet some unattractive ecclesiastical prigs in *Tess*, again, and it is a flinty Pharisaism which makes Angel Clare so unforgiving when his bride confides her history. But in the kindly character of the old vicar, Clare's theologically rigorous father, we see that Hardy appreciated the virtues as well as the vices of the religious community. There is an interesting qualification of criticism also in a poem called "Afternoon Service at Mellstock." Describing the mental torpor of many a

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, "In Tenebris," p. 154.

drowsy ritual to which, as a child, he lent a loud voice and a vacant mind, he yet confesses to a certain humility before the rejected certitudes of those days:

So mindless were those outpourings!  
Though I am not aware  
That I have gained by subtle thought on things  
Since we stood psalming there.<sup>5</sup>

This Hardy has found no satisfactory substitute for the discarded religion of his days of untroubled church-going. If he has any charges against the church as an institution, he does not press them. He does not quarrel with church people; he has merely decided that he is no longer one of them, and goes down a lonely road of his own choosing.

## II

His reason for breaking away is clear even in his earliest poems. He can see no vestige in the actual world of the Heavenly Father whose good pleasure it is to give us the Kingdom. According to his reading of life, the Christian notions about Ultimate Reality are rosy daydreams which one can believe only by remaining stubbornly oblivious to somber facts:

In the foretime, even to the germ of Being,  
Nothing appears of shape to indicate  
That cognizance has marshalled things terrene. . . .  
Rather they show that, like a knitter drowsed. . . .  
The Will has woven with an absent heed  
Since life first was; and ever will so weave.<sup>6</sup>

It is inaccurate to describe Hardy as an atheist. He recognized the existence of an overwhelming superhuman Power who, whether omnipotent or not, is yet capable of annulling all intentions of man. The question which Hardy ponders is not whether there is a God, but what kind of God there is. Although he never came to a settled conclusion, he was always emphatic in denying that the real Supreme Being could be the God of Christian belief.

At times a feeling possesses him that a malicious tyrant may occupy the throne of heaven, taking hideous delight in inflicting injuries on men:

. . . . "Thou suffering thing,  
Know that thy sorrow is my ecstasy,  
That thy love's loss is my hate's profiting!"<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, "Afternoon Service at Mellstock," p. 403.

<sup>6</sup> *The Dynasts*: speech by the Spirit of the Years, p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> *Collected Poems*, "Hap," p. 7.

If not actively and purposefully cruel, this God is, at the minimum, so vengeful as to be morally inferior to human beings. "... though to visit the sins of the fathers upon the children may be a morality good enough for divinities," he remarks ironically in *Tess*, "it is scorned by average human nature."

Yet it is not a sadistic God whom Hardy most often pictures. He is usually a little less derogatory, wavering between alternative judgments:

... we exclaim, "Beneficent  
He is not, for he orders pain,  
Or, if so, not omnipotent;  
To a mere child the thing is plain!"<sup>8</sup>

Ordinarily he gives God the benefit of the doubt by inclining toward the second assumption. We find most frequently, then, a conception of a defective sort of God—a simple Being who does not really mean us any harm but who is more than a little dim-witted and does not know what is going on; he created, and forgot, leaving the operation of the world to the unconscious working of his habits:

"The Earth of Men—let me bethink me . . . . Yea!  
I dimly do recall  
Some tiny sphere I built long back  
(Mid millions of such shapes of mine)  
So named . . . . It perished, surely—not a wrack  
remaining, nor a sign?"<sup>9</sup>

Hardy's protest against the absent-mindedness of God appears in poem after poem. In a piece called "New Year's Eve," for instance, he gives us a glimpse of a torpid Deity who has awakened momentarily to full consciousness to note the turning of the year. God looks with surprise at the web of events which have been issuing from his insensate hand; then, lapsing again into dormancy:

"He sank to raptness as of yore,  
And opening New Year's Day  
Wove it by rote as theretofore,  
And went on working evermore  
In his unweeting way."<sup>10</sup>

Sometimes the God whom Hardy apprehends is so unmindful, so abstracted, that he cannot credit him with any consciousness at all; and having no consciousness, as a spiritual Being he practically ceases to exist. Hardy's questionings then take on an atheistic tone:

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, "A Dream Question," p. 245.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, "God-forgotten," p. 112.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, "New Year's Eve," p. 261.

... come we of an automaton,  
 Unconscious of our pains?  
 Or are we live remains  
 Of Godhead dying downwards, brain and eye now gone? <sup>11</sup>

In this and similar passages we find Hardy in the depths: he sees mankind as utterly alone in the universe, helpless, tragically caught in the vise of the physical world and without hope that there is any sentient Power who could, if he would, release man from his pain:

How arrives it joy lies slain,  
 And why unblooms the best hope ever sown?  
 —Crass Casualty obstructs the sun and rain,  
 And dicing Time for gladness casts a moan . . . .  
 These purblind Doomsters had as readily strown  
 Bliss about my pilgrimage as pain. <sup>12</sup>

There is no strict consistency in Hardy's portrayals of Deity. His aim was not to give a systematic presentation of his thought, but to give an artist's statement of his momentary convictions as they varied with the shifting lights and shadows of his moods. His deep pessimism is half-lighted now and then by dim hopes, but these seldom rise higher than a supposition that the Supreme Power may do as it does, not with malice aforethought, but out of a passing amnesia. Occasionally he sees the tiny gleam of a possibility that at some unknown time in the future God may awake from slumber and repent him of the evil he has allowed to befall mankind:

Nay, shall not Its blindness break?  
 Yea, must not Its heart awake,  
 Promptly tending  
 To Its mending  
 In a genial germinating purpose, and for loving-kindness' sake? <sup>13</sup>

But to Hardy this vision of ultimate rescue is mere speculation—only a hope, based on no real assurances. It does nothing to alleviate the wretchedness of being now in the clutch of an irresistible Order which is unconcerned about our welfare and unmoved by our misery.

Well-nigh absolute determinism is always at the core of Hardy's philosophy. In his view free will is no more than a vestige; it cannot modify behavior. The factors which determine a person's actions do not reside in his inner self, but in the pressure of society, the weight of the immemorial past, the instincts of the blood, and the accidents of the

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, "Nature's Questioning," p. 59.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, "Hap," p. 7.

<sup>13</sup> *The Dynasts*, from "After Scene," p. 354.

moment. Hardy puts this feeling about things into the mouth of Napoleon as he reflects on his tragic invasion of Russia:

I had no wish to fight, nor Alexander,  
But circumstance impaled us each on each;  
The Genius who outshapes my destinies  
Did all the rest! <sup>14</sup>

We only imagine that we make decisions. Hardy was not interested in "... attempts to explain or excuse the presence of evil and the incongruity of penalizing the irresponsible." Belief in the reality of virtue and guilt can serve no purpose save the evil one of destroying sympathy and justifying harsh judgments. Our acts are links in an endless chain of causation—a chain in which there seems to be no place for spontaneous personal creativity, whether human or divine.

Dropping the consideration of this melancholy theology now, the task before us is to discover why Hardy felt constrained to accept the view that life is controlled by such soulless powers. Psychological factors as well as rational considerations will have to be looked into, for his personal make-up is as important as the world of ideas in which he lived.

### III

The intellectual atmosphere which stimulated Hardy will become apparent when we remember that, born in 1840, he came to the age of thoughtfulness in the very period when Darwinism was coming to full recognition. The physical sciences were passing through an era of unprecedented progress and were enlisting the confidence and hope of thinking men. The first assumption of victorious science was that no mysteries are ultimate and that nothing should be ascribed to the supernatural. The working principle of the new era was that every phenomenon has a complete and adequate cause on the natural level and that that cause can be traced by the methods of science. This theory of causation could be taken to entail a thoroughgoing determinism. Hardy, never inclined to ascribe much power to the individual, adopted such a scientific fatalism and used it to heighten his picture of the Ultimate as an almighty mechanism which is coldly indifferent to man.

Current scientific thought provided Hardy not only with support for his interpretation of life, but also a scientific method for arguing the validity of his analysis. The emphasis of science being on inductive procedure, there was insistence that the first step in any search for truth must

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, Part Third, p. 66.

be an unqualified acceptance of observed fact. Hardy claimed to practice the writer's equivalent of the inductive method, often asserting his own realism as over against those whom he accused of seeing everything through the tinted glasses of their theological prepossessions. He sincerely believed himself to be an unbiased reporter of impressions, clinging to nothing, excluding nothing. He felt sure that inductive thinking applied to the realities of existence bore witness to his view that the Ruler of all could not be friendly personal Spirit, and that honest observers must acknowledge that meaningless brutality sets the tone of life.

But the charge that life is all suffering and frustration is not so self-evidently true as to be beyond discussion. No doubt there have been Christians enough who have treasured an elaborate belief for its consolatory value and have felt it necessary to shut their eyes to the harsh things of experience lest their delicate and exotic faith be shaken. Yet many good thinkers, keen in their perceptions and at least as devoted to the scientific method as Thomas Hardy, have seen life in a different light and have found it to provide a basis for reasonable belief. There are men of firm Christian conviction whose status as honest and tough-minded observers cannot be impugned. Pessimistic determinism is not the only sincere analysis which the nature of existence will permit.

The difference between Hardy and such opponents is no mere quibble over logic; there is a fundamental divergence in their evaluation of things. Hardy found disappointment written all over the book of life, but others have read an invigorating challenge there. Since men of equal sincerity give such conflicting interpretations of a world which is common to all, one suspects that a great contrast may be found in the personal make-up of these individuals who reckon life at such different figures.

But *was* Hardy's world a world which is common to all? May his dismal estimate of things have had a just foundation in unusual hardships or misfortunes which embittered his career beyond man's ordinary lot? No, in all visible features the course of his life ran smooth and was singularly free of privations and adversities, at least of the gross and obvious kind. Even though he did not belong to the most fortunate class with regard to birth and education, still his opportunities were well above the average. Success and recognition came to him in his work, both as a young architect and as a more famous man of letters. His two marriages seem to have been felicitous. Need was a lifelong stranger to him. Dickens or Blake or Lamb might have preached Hardy's

doctrine with more manifest justification. In the outward things which are thought to weigh heavily toward happiness or misery in life one does not find sufficient reason for his gloom. His pessimism had its roots in something deeper, something within.

There is a licentious type of disbeliever who quarrels with Christian faith not because it is offensive to his logic but because Christian standards of morality are too difficult for his convenience. Can Hardy be classed with these people who use intellectual objections to justify their moral rebellion? Vituperative reviewers of the last century sometimes accused Hardy of being a libertine, but not on the basis of any knowledge of his private life. His writings show no special awe of moral codes; and it is clear that he did not share the attitude, often found among Christians, that the flesh and all connected with it is vulgar and sinful. But serious biography does not indicate that in asking for tolerant views on moral matters he was attempting an apology for any libidinous behavior of his own. His many enemies found no scandals with which to arraign him. Moreover, Hardy's whole treatment of ethical problems lacks the reckless abandon of the carnalist. He was earnest. He did not brood exclusively over his own plight, but had a deep sympathy for all sorts of persons in their own situations, and was sensitive to the hurt and harm which people inflict upon one another through their moral failures. He was not a disparager of the primary ethical concern for the welfare of the neighbor. It would be difficult to argue that a festering conscience lay behind his disavowal of belief.

Putting aside any accusation that moral hypocrisy was at the bottom of Hardy's irreligion, we must go onward with our search for the personal factor which made faith impossible for him. It will bring us nearer to his indictment against his Maker to note, if we can, the special feature of life which makes his existence burdensome. There is one sharp complaint about the human situation, ringing through dozens of Hardy's lines, which seem to convey his principal grievance against Deity. Strangely, it is not that we have been enslaved in the chains of determinism (Hardy did not love life well enough to be offended by the loss of freedom), but that some travesty of Divine justice has left us, regardless of our helplessness, with full consciousness and the power of feeling pain. Held responsible for our deeds as if they were our own, we are visited with meaningless punitive suffering. The hand of fate has paralyzed us, but still its manipulations make us wince. Hardy's protest is summed up in a passage from *The Dynasts*:

beyo  
sens  
and  
have  
we  
give  
had  
are  
obli  
univ  
scio  
no c

Har  
to h  
pain  
by  
can  
he v  
New

Cre  
with  
we  
prob  
Tho  
wish  
with  
plac

## SPIRIT OF THE PITIES:

"But O, the intolerable antilogy  
Of making figments feel!"

## SPIRIT IRONIC: "Logic's in that.

It does not, I must own, quite play the game."<sup>15</sup>

If man had been created a soulless automaton all would have been beyond reproach. But by some stupid cosmic blunder he was given sensitivity—yes, and awareness and the capacity to wish and to hope—and to feel the smart of life's inevitable disappointments. Purposes we have, but the joys of realization are few and ephemeral. The things we long for are denied us, or granted stintingly and snatched away, or given when their spell has vanished. How much better if mankind had mercifully been left insensate, like stocks and stones! They, too, are under the control of nature's inexorable laws, but they are not obliged to feel the impact and the rending as they are put through the universal Machine! In the primeval limbo before the birth of consciousness, there was no love and hence no loss; no aspiration, and hence no despair at the destruction of the beautiful and the good.

But the disease of feeling germed,  
And primal rightness took the tinct of wrong;  
Ere nescience shall be reaffirmed  
How long, how long?<sup>16</sup>

Hardy demanded a Buddha-path to Nirvana; but no enlightenment came to him. To the end he found no sense in suffering and no way to temper pain. It is in this that he feels man was wronged in the beginning by his Creator; this is the basis of his grudge against Heaven. "How can one be expected to adore the Perpetrator of such colossal injustice?" he would ask. "Tolerate him we must: but praise and reverence him? Never!"

What can a Christian say to this estimate of the world and its Creator? We could dispatch the matter to our personal satisfaction with the simple assertion that this dark picture is not true to life as we perceive it. Such a counterjudgment might allow us to dismiss the problem from our own minds, but it would not carry conviction to a Thomas Hardy, who looks out on things with different eyes. One who wishes his serious attention must meet his point of view fairly and grapple with it. We must test his observations analytically and try to find the place where he is misreading life.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, First Part, p. 127.

<sup>16</sup> *Collected Poems*, "Before Life and After," p. 260.

## IV

We can begin with the obvious: that as Hardy sensed life, its prevailing tone is disappointment. Why should that have been the view of a man so richly blessed with most things that men want? Whatever life may have given him, it must have denied some things which he valued most. Happiness comes with the substantial realization of whatever one considers most worth while, and a person who is miserable must be one who remains unsatisfied in one of the prominent demands which he makes on his existence. What did Hardy expect of life? What was the level of his satisfactions, and which of his values did the world refuse to recognize? An answer will put us nearer to the causes of his disbelief.

Hardy lived in the world of sense. In observing and writing he was first of all an artist, and he looked upon the world with the artist's sharp eye. When he turned to writing as his new profession, the architect's sensitiveness to line and form did not leave him. He possessed in a high degree the English delight in the loveliness of nature. He re-creates landscapes for us with the instincts of a painter. His keen appreciation of beauty on the natural level was one of the elements of his greatness—a gift which deserves high praise.

But the joys and satisfactions which he celebrates in his poetry are also on this physical plane. The beauty which he appreciated was largely beauty which presents itself to the senses, and the bliss which he appreciated was sensuous bliss. When we search out the things which gave him delight we are in the realm of the creaturely satisfactions and find little that arises from the mature thought-life of man as a social being:

Sweet cyder is a great thing,  
 A great thing to me,  
 Spinning down to Weymouth town  
 By ridgway thirstily,  
 And maid and mistress summoning  
 Who tend the hostelry:  
 O-cyder is a great thing,  
 A great thing to me! <sup>17</sup>

Other stanzas of the same poem list among the great things the gayety of the ballroom and the trysts of young romance—innocent interests, yet ones which stand in some kind of relation with the Bohemian trinity of wine, women, and song.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, "Great Things," p. 445.

In "On the Departure Platform,"<sup>18</sup> we are given a charming picture of one of life's moments of blessedness—but into it the shadow of sadness has already come:

We have penned new plans since that fair fond day,  
And in season she will appear again—  
Perhaps in the same soft white array—  
But never as then!

"—And why, young man, must eternally fly  
A joy you'll repeat, if you love her well?"  
"—O friend, nought happens twice thus; why  
I cannot tell!"

Quickly the poet's theme always shifts, emphasis falls on the ephemeral nature of moments of ecstasy, on the speedy passing of beauty; the picture darkens, and we are made to feel a chilling Presence which cares nothing for wounding us:

I saw him steal the light away  
That haunted in her eye:  
It went so gently none could say  
More than that it was there one day  
And missing by-and-by.

I watched her longer, and he stole  
Her lily tincts and rose;  
All her young sprightliness of soul  
Next fell beneath his cold control  
And disappeared like those.<sup>19</sup>

The poet next asks the Thief the purpose for which he is plucking and hoarding this beauty, and is told in reply that he cares nothing for such things and soon throws them away. It is lines like these which clarify Hardy's complaint against life: not that it does not contain bright and glorious things which, when possessed, can make living a pleasure, but that they come to us too seldom and are taken from us too soon, and, in passing, wrench us so that all life is embittered by regret.

Many verses testify to the activity of Hardy's fancy so far as the opposite sex is concerned. He had a sculptor's eye for beauty of feminine face and figure, and the restlessness of a searcher for whom romance is an end in itself:

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, "On the Departure Platform," p. 205.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, "God's Education," p. 261.

Dear Lizbie Browne  
 I should have thought,  
 "Girls ripen fast,"  
 And coaxed and caught  
 You ere you passed,  
 Dear Lizbie Browne! <sup>20</sup>

Such stanzas bear witness to standards of value which, if not licentious, can justly be called sensuous. In a few poems these interests reveal themselves so starkly that they can be called gross. One which is worthy of our notice is a semiconfession called "At Waking," a poem of the next-morning disillusionment. The night's romantic dreams of perfection cannot survive in the gray light of dawn, and

. . . . With a sudden scare  
 I seemed to behold  
 My love in bare  
 Hard lines unfold. . . . .

O vision appalling  
 When the one believed-in thing  
 Is seen falling, falling,  
 With all to which hope can cling.  
 Off: it is not true;  
 For it cannot be  
 That the prize I drew  
 Is a blank to me! <sup>21</sup>

If the last stanza tells us truly where the poet centered his hopes, we can cease wondering why so much of life was a disappointment to him.

## V

There is a similar self-revelation in another poem. "The Re-visitation" <sup>22</sup> tells of the poet's meeting, one evening, an old sweetheart of his youth. In the romantic surroundings of the night they renew their pledge to one another. But the darkness passes, and as in the new light his eye first falls on the lines of her aging face, she senses his recoil:

"Yes, that movement was a warning  
 Of the worth of man's devotion! Yes, Sir, I am old" said she,  
 "And the thing that should increase love turns it quickly into scorning—  
 And your new-won heart from me!"

The poet accepts her reproaches and confesses a besetting weakness which is with him still. But, although he is willing to admit now and then

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, "To Lizbie Browne," p. 118.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, "At Waking," p. 209.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 181. See also "In the Night She Came," p. 213.

the element of sordidness in his attitudes, he does not make any allowance for this in his philosophy of life. He continued in bondage to the restlessness of unstable emotions, and thereby found life always a matter of a few thrills and a great many disappointments. Hardy was like the boy who set out at sundown to reach the house of the golden windows—always reaching the place but never reaching the goal. Yet instead of perceiving that his wants were ill-chosen, he continued to condemn life as a swindle:

O life with the sad seared face,  
I weary of seeing thee,  
And thy draggled cloak, and thy hobbling pace  
And thy too-forced pleasantry! . . . .

But canst thou not array  
Thyself in rare disguise,  
And feign like truth, for one mad day,  
That earth is Paradise?

I'll tune me to the mood  
And mumm with thee till eve;  
And maybe what as interlude  
I feign, I shall believe! <sup>28</sup>

This is not the complaint of the tragedian; he does not lament the fate of godlike characters laid low through one fatal flaw. His is not the pain suffered by the scholar who broods over the pages of human history; he does not ponder the meaning of lost causes and sacrifices given in vain; it is not his complaint that right is on the scaffold and wrong is on the throne, nor does he lament that fair civilizations crumble before the red tides of the barbarian. His protest is that earth is not Paradise, that Life has a seared face, and a draggled cloak, and limps. There may be unconscious meaning in his selection of a word to express his ideal—not heaven, but Paradise—that name filled by the prophet of Arabia with connotations of green silks and wine and the dark-eyed houri in a Garden of Delight. Perhaps Hardy would have been content if the world were a children's playground in a park. Are we wrong in judging that there is something immature—perhaps even coarse—in his nursing a grievance against the Universe for putting a short check-rein on interests of this sort?

No impugment of Hardy's honesty is intended in this criticism. The perversion lies in his standards of value. If one were to grant their

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, "To Life," p. 107.

validity, one would have to go all the way with him to his conclusion that existence is without point. Life cannot but appear in a bad light when asked to justify itself by what it can provide us on the natural level of enjoyments. The fleeting nature of gratifications is one of the universally attested truths of poetry. The following lines are from Robert Burns, who is popularly credited with the right to speak with authority on such matters:

Pleasures are like poppies spread—  
Seize the flower, the bloom is shed;  
Or like the snow falls in the river—  
A moment white, then gone forever.

If this is the last word on the bounties of Providence, then God stands condemned for failure to provide a fulfillment for the individual, and Hardy is dead right in his indictment of existence and That which is responsible for it.

But when we accept any such verdict we have truly come to the bitter end with life:

O vision appalling  
When the one believed-in thing  
Is seen falling, falling  
With all to which hope can cling. . . .

We have taken our dreary places with those whose hearts are filled with "the dust and ashes of things," to whom, as to Tess, "birth itself was an ordeal of degrading personal compulsion, whose gratuitousness nothing in the result seemed to justify, and at best could only palliate." Hope gone, life gone, such people are in the real sense dead, awaiting only the stroke of the pick to make it formal:

They hail me as one living  
But don't they know  
That I have died of late years,  
Untombed although? <sup>24</sup>

## VI

Once having fallen into this pit of despair, one may languish there forever if one wishes. For all his eighty years of life, Hardy seems never to have seen any possibility of extricating himself. Yet he fancied himself as a scientist, and believed that he made his literary observations upon life according to scientific principles of procedure. The

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, "The Dead Man Walking," p. 203.

method of science requires not only certain techniques of observation, but also a willingness to reconsider hypotheses. The failure of one premise to provide a basis for satisfactory living has some validity as an indication that reality demands another. Hardy should have taken to heart the possibility that behind his unhappiness lay the stern but beneficent pressure of the actual Universe, urging him away from ideals inappropriate to the true nature of man and of life. George Herbert could have helped him to understand the silent and tireless ways of God in curbing and channeling the desires of his creatures:

When God at first made man  
Having a glass of blessings standing by,  
Let us (said he) pour on him all we can;  
Let the world's riches, which dispersed lie,  
Contract into a span.

So strength first made a way;  
Then beauty flowed, then wisdom, honor, pleasure;  
When almost all was out, God made a stay,  
Perceiving that, alone of all his treasure,  
Rest in the bottom lay.

For if I should (said he)  
Bestow this jewel also on my creature  
He would adore my gifts instead of me  
And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature;  
So both should losers be.

Yet let him keep the rest,  
But keep them with repining restlessness:  
Let him be rich and weary, that, at least,  
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness  
May toss him to my breast.<sup>25</sup>

A thing which is conspicuously absent from Hardy's writings is a sense of mission. His hope was not to remake life, but merely to enjoy it. He was not narrowly self-centered in his hedonism; he wished other people to find pleasure also, and his complaint is as often in their behalf as in his own. But the great causes which often move high-minded men seem to have had little claim on Hardy—neither commitment to the needs of social progress, nor dedication to the service of the church or the Kingdom of God or any other of those movements through which men gain a sense of contributing to the victory of social and cosmic values. Hence his mind dwells little upon sacrifice; he rarely speaks seriously

<sup>25</sup> George Herbert, "The Pulley."

of it, much less finds in it the meaning of life. He had no transcending passion which demanded the giving of his all. A life devoid of this element is never profoundly happy.

Although Hardy never appreciated the meaning of "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness . . .," still one can find in his outlook certain starting-points from which he could have beaten a better path for himself. He was not entirely devoid of a comprehension of ideals to be upheld, and had some small sense of a task to be accomplished. His fatalistic worldview was incompatible with any great amount of zeal, but he did believe sincerely that human beings should be more kindly toward each other and more tolerant in their judgments; remembering that we, too, are bent and deflected by circumstances, we should hesitate to cast the first stone. He held a cautious and qualified belief that man's inhumanity to man is one evil, at least, which is to some extent remediable. *Tess* is a strong plea against censoriousness and moral arrogance. In his old age Hardy wrote in the preface to his last volume of poems:

. . . . whether the human and kindred races survive . . . . or whether these races perish . . . ., pain to all upon it . . . . shall be kept down to a minimum by loving-kindness . . . . actuated by the modicum of free will conjecturally possessed by organic life when the mighty necessitating forces . . . . that have the "balancing of the clouds" happen to be in equilibrium. . . .

In spite of the dark forest of "ifs," he has admitted the tiny gleam of a possibility that loving-kindness can be increased by influencing what there is of human free will. The break in his pessimistic system is minute but important, for here at last is one constructive belief opening the way to creative work; and if he had put his confidence in it and had struggled and sacrificed enough for it, his complaint against God would have disappeared along with his misery.

A retrospective poem of Hardy's old age, called "Survivor," suggests that he himself regretted at the end that he had not been more aggressive in the support of this highest of his ideals. Sitting before the hearth with his cane, in his meditation he hears a voice from the sputtering fire which speaks of how he had conducted himself when in his prime:

"You held not to whatsoever was true,"  
Said my own voice talking to me;  
"Whatsoever was just you were slack to see;  
Kept not things lovely and pure in view,"  
Said my own voice talking to me. . . .

"You taught not that which you set about . . .  
That the greatest of things is charity."<sup>26</sup>

Hardy did not lack the sensitivity required by a nobler philosophy than the one which he took unto himself.

A lofty admiration could be cited from a second poem—a poem whose insight might have served as center for a new philosophy of life. Based on a historical incident remembered in Hardy's own home county, it has to do with a graceful Elizabethan mansion of singular beauty, which had been bought by a commercial firm and was to be torn down. One poor laborer, when brought to the site and confronted with his task, laid down his tools and refused for any hire to aid in razing so fair a structure. That honest workman was cursed as intractable, and lived out his years without recognition. Only in the hearts of a few local people does admiration for his courage live on:

The stones of that fair hall lie far and wide,  
And but a few recall its ancient mould;  
Yet when I pass the spot I long to hold  
As truth what fancy saith:

"His protest lives where deathless things abide!"<sup>27</sup>

Hardy's uncertainty about the deathlessness of sacrifice was fatal. Faith in the highest values does not become practicable by our merely learning to admire them; we need the confidence that in the end the Cosmos will uphold the labors of those who spend themselves in their support. None has the courage to give when the Universe throws away.

What is the proof that "His protest lives where deathless things abide"? Where is the certainty that "he who loseth his life shall save it"? The only ultimately convincing proof is the intuitive assurance that comes to the heart of him who is giving his utmost. The sacrificial life of the dedicated man can never rationalize itself to one who has no share in its ideals and its goals. The many seek after a sign, but no sign shall be given to the outsider but the poignant incompleteness of life on the natural level. Having seen the pearl of great price, one must go and sell all and buy it. Only then comes a peace that can absorb all the vicissitudes of life.

But has one actual freedom to give his allegiance to the higher or the lower as he will? Hardy had only a feeble hope that his appeals for tolerance could move hearts from their predestined attitudes. We

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, "Survival," p. 660.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, "A Man (In Memory of H. of M.)," p. 140.

can see justifications for such pessimism. Circumstances often grip people with such strength that they cannot shake themselves free. Yet here in our choice of values, if anywhere, is the field in which we have our fighting chance for victory. It is not a universal opportunity to gain fame, or power, or pleasure; it is a freedom in the inner fortress of the soul to love the higher rather than the lower, the Eternal rather than the temporary. And our peace lies in finding through devotion a meaningful place for our work, our hardships, our sufferings, and even our defeats.

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# Toward a New Synthesis

OLIVER READ WHITLEY

*"Renaissance" and "Reformation" attitudes toward man are both necessary; the modern tension between liberal and conservative Christians involves a confusion of proximate with ultimate issues.*

THE BASIC QUESTION with which the devastation of two world wars, and the depravity and bestiality of which they are symptoms, have left us, is the old question of the "nature and destiny of man." It is a question for which science has no answer, since, because no experiment can be performed upon it, it is a silly question in the first place. Nevertheless, the question must be answered. It must be answered because it is no longer possible to concentrate on technics and industrial expansion and let matters of ethics take care of themselves. The Nazis gave us a most convincing demonstration of what happens when this is done. Certainly the history of the fascist movement proves that if a society concentrates on "know-how" to the exclusion of "what-for" it ends by becoming the servant of naked, unmitigated force, used to perpetuate such moral monstrosities as the doctrine of *Blut und Boden*. When technics and industrial "know-how" are believed to be sufficient unto themselves, some absurdity such as "the eternal Germany" rushes in to fill the gaping spiritual void left by the denial of the importance of ethical questions.

The atomic bomb makes imperative a speedy and earnest consideration of the questions, "What ought we to do?" and "Where are we going?" These are ethical and not scientific questions. It is impossible to discuss ethical questions without coming at last to some view of man's *nature* and *destiny*. No ethical distinctions can be made without implicit or explicit reference to this question of nature and destiny. Hence in a profound sense it is the first rather than the last question.

## I

Two viewpoints struggle for the domination of man's mind. One is the child of the Renaissance; the other is the child of Reformation Christianity. In his monumental work, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, Reinhold Niebuhr suggests that our age needs a new synthesis to take the place of the one lost in the rise of modern Western science,

politics, and capitalism. He asserts that such a synthesis is necessary because the one which science offers to take the place of Thomism and Aristotelianism has now been discredited by the course of recent history. Here is the key to an approach to life which will do justice both to the facts of nature and history and to the demands of spirit. It is necessary for us to go back to where the Renaissance and the Reformation parted company and reunite them.

To be sure, one cannot speak of the Renaissance or the Reformation as any *one* thing or idea or movement (since the composition of each is a complex of trends, institutions, and ideas), nor can one point to any one person, place, or date and say that there the Renaissance and the Reformation began. But there are characteristic representatives and emphases which we can delineate. It was at one time fashionable to interpret and describe the Renaissance with the phrase "the revival of classical antiquity." This identifies too completely a great tendency or sweep of history with a specific event. It remains, on the basis of this definition of the Renaissance, to discover what made the revival of classical philosophy and art and other related studies feasible and relevant when it was made probable by the renewal of Greek learning and the discovery of ancient manuscripts. In short, something was happening to the spirit and mind of man which made the revival of classical antiquity meaningful to him. It was no specific and definite thing, but a gradual, slowly evolving consciousness of certain pervading beliefs about man and his destiny that took hold of men in the long period which we call the Renaissance.

These pervading beliefs were in the main three, though there are many shades and variations on these themes which make the picture more complex than might be contained in a simple presentation. To begin with, the Renaissance was characterized by a belief in the "fulfillment of life" as a definite historical possibility. This was conceived both individually and socially and culminated in the doctrine of the infinite perfectibility of man, which we see represented in the period of French enlightenment and Rationalism. Man's mind was reopened to the beauties of nature and creation, and he was encouraged in the belief that the way of realization is open to all who are true to the potentialities with which all men are born. Man, in other words, may be a creature, born to die and disappear, but he is also born to "fulfill himself" and to be happy doing it. When science began to discover more of the truth about nature and how to control it, and make it serve man, this belief in the

fulfillment of life was translated into dreams of eventual complete freedom from nature's vicissitudes and into soon-to-be-realized hopes of universal love and brotherhood.

However, considering the fact that evil did exist and appeared to be so pervasive in history, Renaissance man was forced to the second of his characteristic beliefs, the doctrine that history is *Heilsgeschichte*. There is, it was said, a tendency in history which causes it to purify itself of evil. This belief has many forms, among which might be included Browning's "God's in his Heaven, all's right with the world," or Hegel's theory of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis as the historical process, or Spencer's refinements of the Darwinian theory of evolution, and certainly the idea that sanctification is possible for the Christian and for the institutions which he creates. Some force, power, or a kind of immanent "logos" operates to reduce chaos to cosmos and to transform evil into good. It is important to remember that this force operates from "within" history; and thus history purifies itself by a kind of self-catharsis.

The ultimate expression of the belief that history is *Heilsgeschichte* is the idea that evolution *equals* progress. This was the third characteristic belief of the Renaissance. Observing that constant change is, as Heraclitus said, a law of life, and noting that change involves growth or development, "Renaissance" man believes that this growth is *progress*. Because history purifies itself it follows that the changes which we observe in history contain within themselves a trend or tendency toward the achievement of man's ultimate fulfillment.

## II

The Reformation had its Renaissance element in the sectarian movements, which were often perfectionist and tended to hold the view that once a man became a "saint" through new birth he remained a saint. But the general trend of Reformation thought was otherwise. It emphasized the need for *grace*. Divine grace is necessary, it said, because individual man is involved in a vicious circle of pride and ego and anxiety for the self, and because the cultures and institutions in which man participates tend to regard themselves as absolute and final. In reality they are contingent and relative and perpetuate the sins of the individual, writ large. In the same way that it is impossible for a man to lift himself by his own bootstraps, it is morally and psychologically impossible for him to release himself from the circle of ego by his own power; just so, he cannot without endangering his pride admit that what

he has achieved and will achieve is not the final answer to the community of men in history.

Hence man is in need of grace; and he requires it at every moment of his existence, even after he has participated in the justification which belongs to the Christian through the death of Christ. Man is so depraved that he never, on this side of death, *achieves* sanctification; he is, therefore, never able, of himself and by his own power, to do any good thing. Even his systems of government and justice are for this reason corrupted. Because all social arrangements are corrupted; the one which *now* exists is to be obeyed, since any other would be equally corrupt. Man is to be guided in all relationships by what the Reformation called "orders of creation," arrangements ordained by God from the beginning, but the Reformation thinkers never agreed as to exactly what these are (and indeed, in the nature of the case could not so agree).

The Catholic view, that in the one holy, apostolic church, with its pope at Rome, the Kingdom of God had been realized in history, was naturally rejected by the Reformation. In place of the historical revelation of the Kingdom of God as revealed in history, the Reformation put the revelation of God's truth, as revealed in the Bible. It is not the *Kingdom* but the *truth* of God which is revealed. And it is this truth which tells us that the Kingdom is not realizable within history, because of the recurring sin of man.

### III

In our day it is both possible and necessary to combine the insights of Renaissance and Reformation thought (as here defined) and to look toward a partial synthesis that has more relevance to man's perennial problems than either view alone. Two characteristic expressions, one of the Renaissance view and the other of the Reformation view, will serve to emphasize the characteristic strengths and weaknesses of each. In his novel of labor history in the steel industry, Thomas Bell describes a character in these words:

He had hated poverty and ugliness; he had resented injustice and cried out against that sin of sins, the degradation of man by man, believing the world held few things more precious than human dignity. . . . If some had less than others it was because men had ordered it so and it lay in men's hands to order it differently. It had seemed to him that men needed only to have this explained to them and they'd rise and do what was necessary.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bell, T., *Out of this Furnace*, Little, Brown & Co., 1941, pp. 198-99.

Both the necessity and the inadequacy of Renaissance thought are revealed here.

Men do create in their communities the conditions which deny life's most precious values to many. And it is a false religion which bids men believe that the injustices and social evils they suffer are ordained of God. But the peculiar naiveté of the Renaissance view is revealed in the idea that "men needed only to have this explained to them and they'd rise and do what was necessary." The evils, irrationalities, and absurdities of race prejudice have been explained and proved many times, but either men were not listening or the Renaissance idea of the infinite perfectibility of man is too simple. It is compounded of a confusion of hopes with their necessary realization. Evidently the Reformation emphasis upon the need for grace is not so farfetched or irrelevant as "emancipated" moderns once believed.

It is, of course, true that to a certain extent we are no longer Pollyanna believers in automatic progress, nor do we acquiesce so naïvely when someone tells us that man is *by nature* good and is led astray only by his ignorance. Tragic experience has led us to have some doubts on this score. Our understanding is, however, only partial because we still retain our childish belief that, given economic reconstruction (i.e., the application of known laws to the task of reducing wartime chaos to peacetime order in production and distribution of goods) and technics, the "brave new world" we all desire is assured. Week by week the message is droned into our willing ears: "serving through science," "better things for better living through chemistry," and so on through the whole gamut of our efficient production of gadgets and conveniences for a "thing-minded" society. But the tumult "within" and the conflict "without" persist; fear and anxiety are our daily companions.

Gradually it dawns upon our sick minds that we are not ill because the medicine (in this case, technics and the industrial system of production) is bad, but because the physician has been treating the wrong disease. Science, technics, and education cannot show us the way out unless they be guided and informed by an understanding of man not obtained from within these disciplines of thought and action. The "predicament of modern man" is not scientific or technical; it is moral and spiritual. The solution to our problems does not just *happen* (i.e., it is in no sense guaranteed) whether it be through the immediate application of man's reason and technical skill, or through the slow maturation of some inner logic in the evolutionary process. Hence the Renaissance belief in the

fulfillment of life, history as *Heilsgeschichte*, evolution as progress, does not, by itself, provide the climate of opinion necessary for coping with man's frustration over the disappointment of his hopes.

#### IV

At the opposite extreme is the view expressed recently by a Lutheran pastor that a "man who believes that man can save or *help* himself, be that by the littlest bit of a bit, he has no right to call himself a Christian."<sup>2</sup> This statement could be attacked both as to its truth and as to its relevance. The truth of it after all depends upon what view of Christianity you have. Its relevance to modern problems is such that if it were literally true, which it fortunately is not, religion, life, and history are all meaningless. Implied here is the absurd idea that since all human acts and systems of government are corrupt, it doesn't matter which you choose. But history and experience give the lie to such an absurdity. All human acts and institutions may be, and indeed are, born of man's sin, but it *does* make a difference which you choose.

Conservative Christianity often defends and justifies the most corrupt and evil practices on the ground that since original sin has made human nature bad, *per se*, social justice is not attainable in any sense and is therefore not a concern of the Christian. But the sinfulness of human nature does not render man completely helpless with respect to his life within history; it means only that no social order within his range of understanding can be perfect. If I am a Christian, I will seek to realize Christian truth in social as well as personal existence. Whether it will in the last analysis be realized, and how great are the odds against it in a sinful world, is another question entirely. It does not affect my plain Christian duty to make my faith and belief relevant to the civilization of which I am a part. Christian ethics cannot be merely a soteriology, a doctrine of the need for and the means to salvation; it is also a theory of values, a view of man's creative activity in the drama of history.

From the religious standpoint, this assertion of man's complete and utter helplessness makes no sense either. It is true that man, according to the biblical view, is "a low worm of the dust," but it is also true that he retains the potentiality, if not the absolute possibility, of recovering the divine image which somewhere in history he lost. Even in his fallen state, "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels."

Indeed, the hope of immortality and the need of salvation mean

<sup>2</sup> *The Christian Century*, Vol. 53, No. 17, p. 530.

nothing unless, on *this* side of death, man is expected and empowered to understand, appreciate, and realize certain values. To be sure, man is unable to *save* himself, and in the ultimate sense to *merit* salvation, just as he exists not as creator but as created being, and just as he cannot penetrate beyond the veil of death except by faith; but to assert that he cannot *help* himself or accomplish anything which, in some proximate sense at least, is good, is to render the whole human pilgrimage a ridiculous sham and to make man's aspiration for a decent and peaceful existence a dreadful nightmare. One cannot escape the conclusion that there are some things more worth striving for than others, and if this be true, the significant act of choosing one value in preference to another has some meaning in the economy of God's creation and redemption. It is correctly insisted, then, that the Christian has the responsibility to participate actively in the attempt to build a social existence that is decent and humane, and to oppose any social force which degrades and exploits people. This is the logical and ethical result of the Christian belief that all men are children of God and, as such, brothers and joint heirs with Christ. We are, however, whistling in the dark when we fail to comprehend the pervasive force of sin, and the profound insistence of Jesus that "the kingdom cometh not with observation."

## V

The tension between the so-called *liberal* and *conservative* groups in modern Christendom is really a confusion of proximate with ultimate issues. The liberal Christian is a typical child of the Renaissance. Accepting the mood and temper of Renaissance optimism, he adapts and restates them in religious terms. Feeling within himself the natural pride of man in his ability to harness and control nature, he has learned to think of life as the growth of ever better and more Godlike institutions. His constant emphasis is upon such concepts as "creative personality" and "building the Kingdom of God"; all that is needed, he says, to develop both creative personalities and the Kingdom of God, is more education and knowledge, more reason and science, more technics and industrial advancement. We can, this implies, build a city of God on earth if only we set our minds to it. Thus when the liberal thinker takes seriously the petition of the Lord's Prayer, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth . . ." and regards it as his responsibility to help bring in God's reign of love and brotherhood, he is dealing with the *proximate* issue of how a man ought to live his life, and how he ought to behave

toward other men. In a profound sense, then, the gospel is a "social" gospel; just as a man's life is social as well as personal, so the gospel pertains to the reality of man's existence, which is social before it is personal.

The conservative Christian is a characteristic offspring of the Reformation. He may have a faulty understanding of the relation of personal salvation to social ends and values, and he has incorrectly assessed the significance and worth of science and technics, but he is not so naïve in his understanding of the roots of personality. Knowing that sin, corruption, and evil lie at the depth of human existence and hence are rooted deeply in personality, he does not make the mistake of identifying them with mere stupidity or immaturity. It is here that the conservative view, descended as it is from Reformation Christian tradition, countenances one of the patent facts of both psychology and ethics, that the movement of life is not a steady and certain trend toward a personality or a society of guaranteed moral excellence, but a moment-to-moment struggle, a tension between the demands of animal existence and the demands of spirit. Christianity has insisted upon this since the days of Paul; and it is said of Jesus that he "knew what was in man." It was for the Reformation to rediscover and interpret anew this fundamental principle, and to show how it is related to the doctrine of grace. When the conservative thinker insists that man is utterly without merit and that in the eyes of God "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags," he is dealing with the *ultimate* issue of man's relation to God. Just as man did not create life, so also he cannot justify life in terms of the moral distinctions which are possible for his reason and understanding.

Human life is such that the greatest tragedy is suffering caused by what we call *good* rather than what we call *evil*. This is the sober truth behind Jesus' denunciation of the Pharisees of his own time. There is some point in saying, then, that the whole of life is not comprehended in the distinction between good and evil. The ultimate issue of life, whether the tragic history of man has any significance beyond the passing of a fortuitous concatenation of atoms in a colloidal solution through a series of evolutions from the simple to the complex, in the habitat of a third-rate planet with a tenth-rate sun, is after all in the hands of God. Man's redemption, his ultimate salvation, the vision of God and his hope of penetration behind the veil of death are the free gifts of God. Life is, at its end as at its beginning, a mystery, written not by the achievements of man in technics and industry and in the pursuit of earthly happiness, but by the invisible hand of the Creator.

## VI

An attempt to bring together the truths of both the Renaissance and the Reformation views of man's nature and destiny calls attention to the following areas of thought where exhaustive study would prove rewarding. All are basic to an understanding of man's perennial problems:

1. Man stands in need of divine grace because the whole course of history proves that history, *per se*, is not *Heilsgeschichte*, and because the identification of evolution with progress was false.

2. The sense of the permanence of either individual or social values is an illusion; it is not necessary to believe that an act or policy is absolutely and finally good before we can put it into effect.

3. Belief in the infinite perfectibility of man is a snare and a delusion; it tempts us to regard progress as a natural law and hence to relax our efforts to achieve it, or when we see it is not possible, to sink into a slough of despond, compounded of cynicism and fatalism.

4. Because sin is a reality at every point of man's existence we cannot abandon man either to the laws of nature or to his own laws, for without faith in man and God, civilization returns to the wilderness and the wolf-pack.

5. History is full of possibilities and responsibilities for the achievement of good—and evil—in *this* world and on *this* side of death. It is therefore a good and necessary thing to seek the Kingdom of God on earth; and it is the better part of wisdom never to claim in any sense to have found it.

These propositions do not represent in any final sense the synthesis of the insights and attitudes of the Renaissance and Reformation. Some synthesis of these points of view is, however, of the utmost importance to the understanding of the present crisis of Western civilization. It is essential to the attempt to give practical implementation to the Christian ethic. Especially is this true in a society which is likely at any moment to blow itself into eternity. Perhaps the truth is that in regard to the ultimate issues (i.e., truth and how we know it, reality and its nature, life and how we ought to live it), the characteristic views of the Renaissance and Reformation remain in the relation of opposites in an unresolved dialectic, both of which are necessary to the understanding of man and history. Reformation beliefs, if carried to their logical and ethical extremity, leave man impotent and helpless, bound by the chains of his own misuse of freedom; and they render the whole history of his

tremendous achievement trivial and meaningless. Renaissance beliefs, taken alone, tend toward an unwarranted and naïve optimism, and an unjustified faith in the power which man has shown to understand and control, for his own use, the vicissitudes of nature. But a critical re-examination of both these important tendencies in the cultural heritage of Western civilization will show, I believe, the way to the new understanding of the nature and destiny of man which is so desperately needed, since our society stands in danger of being confounded by the very intelligence that made it great.

Modern man needs the "conviction of sin" which is the heritage of the Reformation; he needs also the feeling of creative power which Renaissance faith in man's future possibilities can give him. One is tempted to particularize by saying that America and Russia need the Reformation, while most of the rest of the world needs the Renaissance, as we have defined these terms here. Behind the push and pull of competing ideologies and powers can be sensed one of two things: either the birthpangs of a new civilization, which will find a co-operative way to use the tremendous technical skill available to modern man, or the dying agony of a civilization which was too smart for its own good. Which it will be depends, in part at least, upon how we succeed in getting the Renaissance and the Reformation back together. Only "Renaissance man" could have created the society which has existed since the Industrial Revolution; perhaps only a "Reformation man" can provide the necessary perspective from which to evaluate that society. Hence, the need for a new synthesis.

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# The Church's Ministry to the Physically Ill

ROBERT D. MORRIS

*Spiritual problems frequently accompany physical illness. An experienced hospital chaplain suggests ways in which the church can help the body through the soul.*

## I

**ILLNESS PRESENTS** unusual opportunities to consider the spiritual needs of the patient, who is stripped of many of the interests that normally absorb his time and energy. As an older person said recently during her convalescence following a stroke, "My religion seems to be all that I have to count on."

In the hospital there is time to look back over the past, to rethink the present, and to make plans for the future. It is now possible through the use of sedation and anesthesia to keep physical pain at a minimum; but usually the illness, rather than lessening the pain of the spirit, brings it out more clearly. There is as yet no hypodermic which can be injected into a man's soul to relieve the pain of his grief over the recent loss of a loved one. If he is to find relief from this kind of pain, he must have someone who can sit down beside him and listen carefully to him as he talks, not of his physical symptoms but of the things that are of concern to his spirit—the meaning of his illness; his griefs, guilts, fears, anxieties, grudges, hopes, convictions; his relationships in his family, in his work, and in his church.

In an editorial in *The Modern Hospital*, July, 1946, there appears this statement:

As the knowledge of psychosomatic medicine emerges, the role of hospital attendants in the treatment of illness will grow in importance. It has long been recognized that the emotional tone of medical and nursing staffs and of nonprofessional hospital workers is in some way related to the quality of hospital care. This relationship, as it turns out, is direct and significant; good emotional tone is an essential of good hospital care, not just an added frill. If the hospital provides a favorable psychic environment, the patient's recovery is aided; if the environment is unfavorable, it is retarded.

The editorial goes on to suggest that the hospital worker who is of an unhappy spirit may not only upset his patients but even make them sicker.

Both the spirit of the patient and the spirit of those who care for him are of concern to the church.

Some time ago a patient came into the hospital with a broken leg. He was operated on but the leg did not heal, and there was an infection in the ankle bone which persisted for months. The ankle was drained repeatedly, but there was little improvement. This man—strong, independent, capable—now had to depend upon others; his family suffered from his inability to provide for them, and he became moody, discouraged, self-condemnatory. It was equally important to save his ankle bone and to save his self-respect, his sense of responsibility, his faith in himself and in God.

Dr. Leland E. Hinsie says, in *The Person in the Body*:<sup>1</sup>

Within recent years it has been generally recognized that a very fair proportion of bodily disturbances is due to the moods, the emotions of the individual, to the ideas he builds up about himself regarding his body. In some persons the fear of disease is often the only damaging evidence of disease, yet it can be so strong as to disable the person in all his daily activities.

This is not to suggest that the church has responsibility in the treatment of physical illnesses whose origin lies in the faulty feelings of the patient. That is the physician's work, and he will assume complete responsibility for it. The way the church ministers to a patient's spirit, however, may have effects, good or bad, upon the patient's physical condition. In any case, the goal is improvement of the patient's relation to God, helping him achieve peace of mind, renewed hope, increased confidence in the ultimate outcome, not only of his illness but of his whole struggle to live the good life, using the God-given resources in himself and in the church.

## II

One of the most common responses in illness is that of grief, either as a result of bereavement or as "anticipatory grief." The latter is a term used by Dr. Erich Lindemann, who has written a descriptive account of some of the dynamics of grief in a paper presented to the American Psychiatric Association in 1944. In his paper Dr. Lindemann says:

We were at first surprised to find genuine grief reactions in patients who had not experienced a bereavement but who had experienced separation, for instance, with the departure of a member of the family into the armed forces. Separation in this case is not due to death but is under the threat of death.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> W. W. Norton & Co., 1945, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted from article "Symptomatology and Management of Acute Grief." *American Journal of Psychiatry*, Vol. 101, 1944, pp. 141-148.

There are many kinds of grief response—that which follows the loss of a member of the family by illness or fatal accident; that which comes in response to a member's leaving the family circle; that which comes from anticipation of possible death, as with admission to the armed services during wartime; that which is associated with loss of love of husband or wife, though they continue to live with each other. And there is the grief response which is caused by the concern of parents over a child who has got into trouble at school, or in social life, or with the law; and the response which accompanies loss of self-respect, prestige, status, income, or any other part of self or family which is held to be essential for life and well-being.

Mrs. B. was seen after undergoing a minor operation. The nurse described her as melancholy and uncommunicative. The patient said she was glad a pastor had come to see her, and immediately began to give an account of recent happenings. She said she had been unable to go to church during the last few months without crying, and for that reason had stopped going. Several years before, her husband had died of a heart attack, and a short time after his death her son was inducted into the armed forces. The patient said that she and her husband had been very happy together, that she used to sing in the choir, had been active in several women's clubs, and had always enjoyed varied activities with a large number of community groups. Now nothing interested her; she was always tired, and she had dropped all relationships outside the work by which she supported herself and regular letter writing to her son. After she was assured that the worker was aware of the pain and distress associated with her experiences and her response to them, she gave something of her early life. Her father had died when she was three. Her mother married the hired man, whom the patient described as a loafer and a drunkard. The older girls left home shortly after, but the patient stayed with her mother until she was seventeen. For several years before she left home she was encouraged by the mother to accede to the stepfather's drunken advances. Several times she ran away, and finally she was made a ward of the state and permitted to live in a foster home. Her hatred for her stepfather was very strong; she said she would still horsewhip him if she had the chance.

When she was nineteen she was married to a quiet, hardworking man who was attracted by her vivacity and beauty and her ability to get things done. She took a much more active part in social affairs than he did, and he seemed to be content to remain at home and to bask in

her social glory. The patient characterized her life with him: "We had a beautiful life together; we planned together; we worked things out together; we grew together, and life was full and rich."

After her husband's death, the pastor came once to see her but she was not at home. He left his card, and she hoped he would return, but was unable to get in touch with him and did not see him again. A few months after this an elderly friend of the family spent several days helping her to clear up business matters and shortly thereafter asked her to marry him. The patient said she realized she might have to be his nurse, but she felt she needed someone and that she could be a good wife to him. They were married. Very soon afterward the patient learned that her husband, some twenty-four years older than herself, was an alcoholic and was not interested in a normal marital relationship. He beat her several times, and after he had choked her so that she had to be admitted to a hospital, she left him and later was granted a divorce with a large financial settlement.

The patient's experience in her second marriage brought back vividly the deprivation in the loss of her father and the experience with her stepfather during adolescence. The sense of failure, of shame and guilt, and of isolation was increased, and she found it impossible to reach out to the usual groups and friends for companionship and help in meeting the loss of her husband and the mistake of her second marriage. As she confessed her feelings in her earlier experiences and saw that she had really desired an older person "like a father" to whom she could turn in her grief, she began to make plans to return to church and to renew her friendships. She said in the final visit that she felt her sorrow was behind her and she could begin a new life. The relationship was closed with a prayer:

"O God, thou hast brought us from sadness into joy, from despair into hopefulness. We thank thee for thy healing ministry through surgeon and nurse, through sacrament and prayer. By thy grace we have found relief for shame and guilt; barriers have been broken down, and plans have been made to see old friends and to make new ones. The bonds of mourning have been loosened, and the memory of happy days with husband and with son can be clearly held without tears. Help thy servant continue to work through her troubles, holding fast to the picture of those she loves and building a new life worthy of them, forgiving and forgetting where she has been hurt and seeking to understand and change where she needs forgiveness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

This patient's grief had been complicated by the impulsive seeking for security and comfort from a man who was unable to give it to her and who treated her very much as her stepfather had. Her experience is in keeping with Dr. Helene Deutsch's observation that in crisis there is a remarkable tendency to repeat earlier patterns of experience. This emphasizes the importance of adequate pastoral care of the grief-stricken in the parish as well as during physical illness. This means in addition to appropriate burial services an understanding of the background of the person, giving pastoral and theological comfort and helping in every way possible to relieve the desire to do impulsive and self-destructive things, which often follows grief.

A great deal of life loses meaning when a loved one dies, and it is necessary to build new habits and new activities which are appropriate to the relationships that are still a part of life. The church can help the patient accept the pain, can quiet some of the common fears that are a part of bereavement, can give opportunity to confess where there was failure or hurt in the relation with the loved one, and assist in formulating what the future relation will be to the loved one, and in making plans for continuing life.

Mr. R. was a shipyard foreman whose son was killed on a South Pacific island over a year before the father's admission to the hospital. The patient came in after a superior had told him that he might be killed at the yard if he did not secure help for his spells of blacking out. In the first visit the patient said he had been concerned about the way things had been going at the yard and noted that he first began having trouble a few days after the end of the war, when everyone let down and he had much less to do than he had had for several years. He complained about some of the workmen who were constantly asking for raises and dropping their tools at the slightest provocation. But he said: "I think my trouble is that I lost my boy last year. When I heard about it, I felt like I had been hit with a hammer."

The patient felt ashamed of continued expressions of grief and tried to keep other people from knowing how he felt. After he learned of his son's death, he drove his workers unmercifully so that they broke all records for production in the shipyard. At the same time he was occupied with morbid, terrible thoughts of what the Japs might have done to his son, so that at one time he might become very angry about some little thing; at another time he would be so tense that he would get up and throw things around; and he still had trouble sleeping. He first

noticed the blacking out, he said, while standing at his older son's wedding. When he looked up and saw a gold-star flag hanging near the altar, he felt queer, swayed, and almost fell.

The patient was next seen after he attended the chapel service. He said, "You know in some ways it was better for me than a good meal; I think I needed it." He was a little more at ease, but screwed up his face, tightened his lips, and had nervous tremors around his eyes as he talked about his son. He revealed that his mother had died when he was sixteen, a short time after a doctor had told her that there was nothing wrong with her. The patient remembers vividly her crying at this and his resentment over it. He was the oldest boy and had to lock the door to the room in which his mother's body was laid, because his father would go into the room and lift up the body by the shoulders. Shortly after that his father committed suicide, and the patient felt bitter and critical that his father "was not man enough to take the loss of my mother."

The patient then went to live with an aunt and uncle in a mining community. He worked in the mines and turned his pay check over to them. One day he was hurt, and while lying in bed after the other men had brought him home he overheard his aunt and uncle discussing what should be done with him. He realized then that they cared only for his pay check and not for him, and as soon as he was able he left them. He also recalled that it had been a severe blow to him when his first child, a boy, died of pneumonia. He recalled the pleasure it gave him to have the child run to the gate to greet him when he came home from work, and said it took him a long time to get over the loss.

He then spoke more of his son's death, of his long visit with the lieutenant in his son's battalion, his feeling that his son might have been too reckless, and his wish that the boy had thought of his mother—the patient's wife—when he was making out his army insurance, instead of assigning it all to his own wife. On another visit to the study the patient revealed that he had a terrible hatred toward the Japanese following the death of his son, and he vowed that he would take personal vengeance if a Japanese person ever provoked him. Shortly after he was admitted one of the Japanese-American nurses went in to take his temperature and pulse, and the patient had thoughts of choking her. As he came to know his nurse and saw that she was treating him with kindness and understanding he began to give up some of his hatred, and before he was discharged said that it had meant as much to him to have her care as to have medical treatment. "It made me feel differently," he said.

In the final visit he said that he was beginning to accept the fact of his son's death; and also that he wanted to begin going to church again.

There are a number of patients like Mr. R. who seem to be unable to go to church until they have talked over some of the things that are concerning them. The hospital is on the front lines of the church's ministry and gives an excellent opportunity to care for people who want to belong to the fellowship of the church and need it badly but are unable to take the steps of belonging without help.

One of Mr. R.'s fears, which it was suggested he relate to the doctor, had to do with surgical procedures. He had a very dear friend who had been operated on for a prostate difficulty and had to be in the hospital for over a year. The patient felt that this might happen to him; but the doctor was able to reassure him. At several points he seemed desirous of having surgery. This is seen in some patients who are grief-stricken, who wonder why they should not have died instead of the loved one, and who seem to feel that surgery will cut out the pain of the loss.

A patient who expressed this clearly was the mother of two girls, one seventeen and the other fifteen. She was admitted for complaints in the upper abdomen, and seemed anxious to have an operation. The patient was disturbed when her older daughter left home to go to school and said that she missed this older girl very much. It seems she was much more dependable than the younger daughter, with whom she had been having considerable trouble. The patient said she didn't trust the younger daughter, who did things behind her back, would not obey her, wore her best dresses to school, brought a great many young people to the house while the mother was away at work, did not confide in her, and kept change from money that the mother gave her to buy food. During this visit she expressed considerable resentment toward the child, also some feeling that perhaps she ought not to work and should stay at home and give more attention to her husband and daughter. She said the only reason she worked was to give the children things they would not otherwise have. It was suggested that perhaps they wanted most to have her companionship and interest and that it would be worth while to rethink the matter of working.

She agreed. In the last visit the patient said: "I've felt so much relieved since our talks together. They have helped me a great deal—just like taking a burden from me. I feel that the whole thing is much lighter than it was before and I can do something about it. I think

the problem with my daughter has kept me upset, and now that I've talked about it, I don't feel that fullness around my heart."

This patient's physical symptoms cleared up, and it was decided that no operation was necessary. She did not return to work, and was able to effect considerable improvement in her relationship to her daughter. When last seen she said that things were going much better at home.

### III

One of the chief purposes of pastoral care is to nurture wholesome family life. The opportunity to meet the patient in the hospital, when, in some instances, family difficulty is an even greater cause of anxiety than illness, is one which the church can use to the utmost.

Oftentimes the patient will not be far enough along in spiritual development to utilize many of the sacramental resources, and at the beginning of the relationship listening is probably the most important instrument the worker has. To make an accurate spiritual diagnosis one must know sufficient facts on the spiritual condition, its development, characteristics, expressions, and where possible something of its origins. In some instances, simply the opportunity to talk freely will be of sufficient help to the patient, so that he can go on to work out his spiritual concern largely by himself.

There are many opportunities to illuminate the meaning of Scripture and of religious acts. One patient revealed that he had recently visited his home and regretted the way he had treated his family. He said he had prayed many times that he might do better, but always without success.

"Then the prayer wasn't answered?" "No, I guess not." "Perhaps we might work together on the matter while you are here." "I would like to do that." It was learned that there was a brother four years younger whom the patient felt he mentally mistreated. The brother wanted to go everywhere with him when he was at home; and he felt guilty if he said "no" to any request. He had promised last winter to take the boy on a camping trip, and because his brother failed to keep a promise to come home at a certain time, which the patient had arbitrarily set, the camping trip was called off—"to teach him a lesson." The patient spoke of this in a self-righteous way, explaining that he felt that what his brother did was far worse than his own breaking of the promise about the camping trip. It was suggested that he include in his daily prayers: "O God, help me to see this in the light of thy love." Out of this came

an effort to see the situation from his brother's point of view, recognizing the tremendous disappointment that had come out of his effort to get even. He saw further that he had had no right to exact the promise he did; it was a parental prerogative which he had usurped in other instances also in dealing with his brother. His conclusion was that he had been mistaken; and that what he had done was serious. As he became aware of what he had been expressing toward his "baby" brother, he made plans to write a letter to him, and saw that this was an opportunity to put the relationship on a more Christian level than it had been when he thought of him as the baby of the family rather than a growing person in his own right, with whom he might be a good friend.

It was agreed that this process of thinking through the relationship and taking action to improve it was of the essence of prayer. First, his distress and troubled mind about it: "O God, I am sorry about the way I treat my family, and I want to do better; help me to see this in the light of thy love." *Petition*. "O God, help me to understand how my brother felt about this, and what it meant to him." *Intercession*. "O God, I made a serious mistake; I have sinned against my brother and in thy sight; help me to make amends." *Confession*. "O God, I feel better about this, and I can get along better with my brother; I thank thee for this blessing." *Thanksgiving*.

Here the patient was able to accomplish two things of basic importance to his spirit. He clarified his relation to his brother, and he saw the meaning and the use of prayer in that relation. This removed prayer from the intellectual and academic realm, and made it the means of seeing his daily living in the light of God's will for him. After appropriate action was taken the Holy Communion had more meaning for him, and our Lord's words, "If . . . thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift," were more meaningful.

#### IV

Another common concern of the sick person which is of interest to the church is that of grudge-holding and of unresolved grievances. The question "What have I done to deserve this?" is often found in the person who either in act or feeling has wished harm on someone else and has instead become ill himself.

Mrs. N. was very much disturbed; she cried and moaned, calling out, "O Lord, help me; O Lord, save me!" and when questioned by

the doctor or nurse she said she was going to die. The patient was visited by the social worker, who asked if there were anything that she could do in regard to the family, but the patient replied that they were able to get along all right. When seen by the chaplain, she said that she was certain she was going to die—that she had never felt so badly. She thought it must be something mental, because her imagination was running away with her. She was asked to explain what she meant. She said it seemed that all kinds of terrible things were wrong with her, and that she was hopeless. Her five-year-old boy had been very much on her mind. The death of her husband, three years previously, had left her with the responsibility for her five-year-old child. She concluded, "I wonder why this should have happened to me; I have always led a good life, and I don't know that I have hurt anybody."

The worker explained that this idea often has to do with the way we felt as well as the way we acted. Perhaps there were times when she felt things she thought she might be punished for. She admitted that there were such times. She had often been cross and angry with her mother. "My mother is a very sloppy and greedy person; she has no religion at all. The woman next door came to me last year and told me that my mother beat my little boy while I was at work, and it almost broke my heart. When I give money to the church she criticizes me and says that they just fill their pockets with it; she says mean things and yells at me. It really has been so bad that I am completely disgusted; it has made me sick." The patient had never gotten along with her mother, even as a child, but when younger she was always afraid to talk back to her. It was clear also that she had recently made a great change from her own nicely furnished home among congenial friends in a pleasant neighborhood to her parents' home; but it was not clear at this point why she had been willing to make such a change.

The following day the nurse reported that the patient was not so disturbed and had slept better the preceding night. The patient again said that something must have gone wrong with her mind, and then began immediately to talk of her relation to her mother. "I think this goes way back into my childhood. I was always a very meek and mild person who did everything that my mother asked. Mother ruled the whole family; no one ever dared cross her. She has a vicious temper. I remember once that she lost her temper, and I thought she was going to have a stroke." The patient shuddered. "I never want to see that again." The patient went to work at fourteen, was not permitted to

have friends at the house, and was forbidden to have dates. At nineteen she met her husband, went with him a short time and married him. She said that they had a happy time—parties for the children, songs around the piano, picnics—all the things she had wanted but couldn't have when she was a girl.

Her husband was gassed in World War I and had a heart condition; he was sickly for some time before he died. When the patient had her last child, thirteen years after the one before, her mother was very critical and said that the husband was not so sick he couldn't give her a child. Her own interpretation was that God had given her the child to take the place of her husband, who died soon afterward. The patient said she knew exactly what she was getting into after her husband's death, when she returned to her mother's home; and she went entirely for her father's sake. She said her father was a very cheerful, pleasant person and was the one who gave her the most help in her grief. She spoke resentfully of the pastor who came in the day before her husband died and asked loudly if he were ready to meet the Lord. The patient's face lit up as she spoke of her father. She likes to do things for him and to have him share in the parties she gives for her boy. It was out of this devotion to her father and the comfort that he gave her that she went home.

She recognizes her resentment toward her mother and says she feels guilty about it and perhaps she is being punished for it. "It says in the Bible, 'Honor your father and your mother.'" She hoped that her mother would be more kindly since she had been ill. This possibility was discussed, and the patient saw that nothing had happened to change her mother but that she very much *wanted* her mother to be kindly and tender toward her. It would appear that she herself would have to make the necessary changes to have the sort of home and to follow those activities which would bring her more happiness and enable her to fulfill her responsibilities to her son.

In the next visit she said she was feeling better. "Things have begun to straighten out, and I can think much more clearly. I was terribly down, but I am beginning to buck up again." She began to make plans—to take up her music again, to return to the church, and to join one of the groups in which she was interested; to have friends come to the house, and to go out regularly with them. Then she brought up her son's temper tantrums. She realized that she had contributed to the boy's problem by treating him inconsistently—with leniency one day,

and with harshness the next. The child's coming was entirely unplanned for, and she was extremely upset and resentful. It was clear that the mother needed help in relating to the child, and after discussion she agreed to visit a child guidance clinic. The relationship was closed with a prayer of thanksgiving for the new possibilities that God had revealed to her. The patient was discharged the following day. In a conference with the physician, the situation was later reviewed. He said that the patient's attitude had improved markedly, and that she had ceased after a few days to be a problem on the ward. He wanted to know what kind of medicine had been used in treating her spiritual needs.

## V

One of the early church fathers called the Holy Communion "medicine for the soul." Patients often mark the reception of the Communion as the turning-point of their illness experience. It is certainly the church's chief "medicine," and it helps to sum up all that is good in the patient's relation to God and to other people.

Mr. A. came to the hospital with severe pains which were diagnosed as gallstones. The patient had a very difficult time after the operation and was irrational much of the time. Three days afterward he received Holy Communion, and soon afterward had his first restful sleep.

This is one of the values of sacramental acts which other hospital workers are likely to observe. It helps to bring the patient's attention and interest outside of himself, overcoming the withdrawal that is characteristic of many patients following operation. Dr. Normal Freeman, a neurosurgeon, tells of a woman in surgical shock whom the staff could not arouse. Finally, as a last resort, he went to the room where the patient's husband and nine-year-old daughter were waiting. He mussed up the little girl's well-brushed hair and then took the daughter into the room. As the daughter approached the bed the mother saw her dishevelment, and she, who had always kept her child well groomed, reached out feebly in an effort to smooth her hair. The surgeon said his patient's recovery from shock began with this effort to reach out to her daughter. Thus was contact established with her, and further measures to help her come back were applied. In the Sacrament there is contact with the Source of life, and the strength which comes from Christ himself. Not only does this holy food help the patient reach beyond himself, but it reassures him that God actively cares and that life is of eternal worth.

It is important that the patient realize the real meaning of the Sacrament, that it not be invested with magical significance or made a substitute for necessary medical care. One must be alert to the possibility that the patient who has not expressed his guilt, fear, or resentment is likely to interpret the administration of Holy Communion without any discussion of his spiritual condition as a sign that "everything is all right." One of the factors in illness is the evasiveness of the patient and his tendency to avoid many of the real issues in his life. The Christian religion and its sacraments may be a powerful force in helping the patient meet his life situation. Therefore, careful preparation, which takes into account both the objective meaning of the Sacrament and the subjective needs of the patient, is necessary. As the Prayer Book Exhortation says: "For as the benefit is great if with a true penitent heart and lively faith we receive that Holy Sacrament, so is the danger great if we receive the same unworthily."

Worship may have considerable value for the patient in helping him relax and give his attention to God, particularly when there are opportunities to be brought to a chapel in a wheelchair or in bed. Occasionally the bed patient may relax so completely that he will fall asleep, and the service may be accompanied by an occasional snore. One can observe bed and wheelchair patients before the service as they listen to the organ and see that they are beginning to "let go" and respond to the worship experience.

Worship in the hospital can help the patient recall that which has been bothering him but which he has not admitted to himself. It can give focus for new insight that he has previously been working on but has been unable to crystallize. It can orient the patient to God and to his opportunity in life rather than to sick feelings and unsatisfied wishes. It can help him see those things which are good in his situation and express thanksgiving and appreciation for them. It can add to the security and confidence in the hospital and it often clarifies the meaning of Christ's religion for daily life outside the hospital.

One patient's chapel experience in the hospital marked a new beginning for her, and after she returned home she wrote: "The visits and the chapel services helped me to recognize the full purpose of a church hospital—that one can be helped spiritually as well as physically. The first Sunday that I came to chapel and saw the other patients on beds, crutches, and wheelchairs, it gave me a new picture of the day when the sick, blind, and lame were brought to our Lord. Then many

needed to be healed spiritually as well as physically. That was also true in my life. I, too, had such a need." Thus, in the care of the spirit, the mission of the church is in part fulfilled, to heal the broken-hearted, to relieve the bruised, to give recovery of sight to the blind, and to bring the acceptable year of the Lord.

Ultimately, it is to be hoped, the church will translate the understanding of the spirit of the physically ill into parish practice and help the parishioners maintain spiritual well-being, so that tendencies to illness will be lessened. In this preventive pastoral care we will find the best use of the understanding we have gained in ministry to the physically ill.

#### VI. SUGGESTIONS FOR PARISH PRACTICE

1. *Plan your visit.* What does the patient need in things or spirit which you can give through your friendship?

2. *Talk with the doctor or nurse* before seeing the patient. It is useful to learn from them how he has been getting along and how he feels today.

3. *Pull up a chair.* Make it easy for your friend to begin talking with you by being natural, comfortable, and quietly cheerful.

4. *Give assurance.* The hospital is the best place for a sick man. You can help your friend realize this by your own confidence in all that is being done for him and by your own trust in the hospital staff.

5. *Understand.* Wholeheartedly put yourself in your friend's place long enough to appreciate how he thinks and feels about the experience, but remember that it is his sickness and not yours.

6. *Listen.* The sick man needs a good listener, and it is through really hearing what he has to say that you discover what you can do to be helpful.

7. *Respond.* Help your friend feel secure, comfortable, hopeful, and free from anxiety by all that you say to him and do for him after you have seen his real needs.

8. *Follow through.* If there is something you can do for him after you leave, talk it over.

9. *End your visit* with confident trust that in your friend's complete response to God's care there is real security and salvation.

10. *After the visit.* Offer up to God your relation to your friend, seeking light on the meaning of your visit and further ways you can help him know the real sources of strength and peace.

# Hymn Patterns

CARL F. PRICE

*A hymn is more than music. Pastors should call attention to the thought content, so that congregations may sing with more intelligence and devotion.*

IT IS STRANGE that so much has been written about patterns in hymn-tunes and so little about patterns in the hymns. The hymn-tune is one of the simplest, shortest forms in musical literature, often as brief as the quatrain in poetry; yet sometimes it contains a pattern that is of interest and significance to the scholarly musician. Professor Waldo Selden Pratt, late of Hartford Theological Seminary, made an illuminating study of the patterns of the tunes Calvin used in Geneva.<sup>1</sup> But a musical pattern, even if casually recognized, can scarcely affect the worshipful emotions or thoughts of a congregation while singing a hymn.

The recognition of a hymn pattern, on the other hand, can in many instances produce a profound effect on hymn-singing worshipers, if somehow they have been brought to sense that pattern and follow its logic while singing. Conceivably, this might make all the difference between singing a hymn listlessly, as too much hymn-singing is done, or intelligently, as all hymn-singing ought to be done.

It is fatally easy for some members of a congregation to repeat the Lord's Prayer perfectly without their minds functioning upon a single thought in that most exalting of all prayers. By St. Augustine's strict definition, a hymn is addressed to Deity; and, though we occasionally depart from that definition, most of our hymns are so addressed. It is a hollow mockery for us to "say" the Lord's Prayer or to sing a hymn directed to God without entering into the meaning of the words with the whole mind and heart. This can easily become a lethal habit—deadly to the true spirit of worship. Herein lies one of the chief perils in the present-day trend toward beautifying our worship with more elaborate ritual. It is the responsibility of the pastor to guard his congregation from falling into this listlessness. How far it behooves him to study hymn patterns and share his recognition of them with his people, perhaps it is not seemly for a layman to say; but it is certain that some hymns can be more readily understood if their

<sup>1</sup> *The Music of the French Psalter of 1567*, by Waldo Selden Pratt. Columbia University Press, 1939.

patterns are explained, thus making more possible a certain reality in hymn-singing.

## I

Just what is meant by hymn patterns can be easily illustrated by examining some hymns of the *Trinitarian pattern*. "Come, Thou Almighty King" is of this pattern. In the 1905 *Methodist Hymnal*, this hymn was attributed to Charles Wesley; in the 1935 *Hymnal* it is more accurately labeled "Anonymous." There is no valid evidence as to its authorship, save the negative evidence that the Wesleys never published it nor used its meter in hymns they are known to have written. The first stanza is addressed to the First Person in the Godhead, the "Almighty King," "Father all-glorious"; the second stanza to Jesus Christ, the "Incarnate Word"; the third stanza to the "Holy Comforter," "Spirit of power"; and the last stanza is addressed to the Trinity, "great One in Three."

A hymn that follows this same Trinitarian pattern is the prime favorite in the British Royal Navy and is often sung in the United States Navy, William Whiting's "Eternal Father, strong to save." As in the hymn previously cited, the first three stanzas are addressed, respectively, to the Three Persons in the Godhead, and the last stanza to the "Trinity of love and power." In each of these hymns the Trinitarian pattern is simple and obvious, and is cited here more for the purpose of defining what a pattern is than for suggesting any special influence the pattern may have on the congregation's thought.

In respect to the hymn, "Eternal Father, strong to save," it is significant that during World War II quite a different version of the hymn has been current, which departs completely from the Trinitarian pattern though it begins with the same first line. If its revision was made for the purpose of eliminating therefrom the doctrine of the Trinity, this is not the only Trinitarian hymn that has suffered revision for that same end.

A hymn form that is easily recognizable is the *conversational pattern*. It consists of alternate questions and answers, leading to a climax of conclusion. A classic example of this pattern is Sir John Bowring's famous missionary hymn, beginning, "Watchman, tell us of the night," and based on the esoteric prediction in Isaiah 21:11-12, beginning, "Watchman, what of the night?" The first couplet of the hymn is a question, addressed by the traveler to the watchman:

Watchman, tell us of the night,  
What its signs of promise are;

to which the Watchman replies:

Traveler, o'er yon mountain's height  
See the glory-beaming star!

Throughout the rest of the hymn each couplet is alternately in the words of the traveler or the watchman, until finally in the last couplet the glorious conclusion is reached:

Traveler, lo, the Prince of Peace,  
Lo, the Son of God is come!

The hymn that John Mason Neale translated from the Greek *Lenten stichera* by St. Andrew of Crete, "Christian, dost thou see them," makes dramatic use of questions and answers. The questions, composing the first half in each of the first three stanzas, tempt the hesitant soul with (1) terror, (2) weariness, (3) impatience:

Christian! dost thou see them on the holy ground,  
How the powers of darkness rage thy steps around?

But the reply in the second half of each stanza heartens him through faith to resist and conquer all such temptations:

Christian! up and smite them, counting gain but loss,  
In the strength that cometh by the holy cross.

The emotional contrast between fearsome question and courageous answer in this hymn is depicted strikingly in Dr. John B. Dykes's tune, "St. Andrew of Crete."

Another hymn that Dr. Neale derived, at least in part, from the Greek follows the question-and-answer form in alternative couplets, "Art thou weary, art thou troubled?" or "languid," as Neale wrote it. Each question implies some desperate need of the soul; each answer meets this with an expression of its fulfillment.

In Johann C. Schwedler's hymn, "Ask ye what great thing I know," with five-line stanzas, the questions appear in the first four lines of the stanzas and the answer is in the last line, "Jesus Christ, the Crucified"—the one answer to all the questions in the hymn. In Dean Earl Marlatt's hymn, "Are ye able," the question is answered in the refrain, "Lord, we are able" (though also anticipated in the third and fourth lines of the first stanza). In Gerhard Tersteegen's hymn, "God calling yet!"

the complete response to all the appealing questions of the first four stanzas is in the fifth stanza:

God calling yet! I cannot stay;  
My heart I yield without delay:  
Vain world, farewell, from thee I part;  
The voice of God hath reached my heart.

With the exception of this last, all of the question-and-answer hymns, even with the variations in pattern that we have noted, lend themselves to antiphonal singing between choir and congregation, or between two sections of the congregation, with peculiar effectiveness. Dean McCutchan has even advocated the antiphonal reading of "Art thou weary"—the question by choir and congregation, the answer by the minister. In leading large conventions, he has obtained a thrilling effect by having the choir sing the first four lines in each stanza of "Ask ye what great thing I know," and the congregation the last line. Occasional use of such antiphonal singing accentuates the form of the conversational pattern and fastens the thought of the singers on the meaning of the words.

Let us consider a hymn whose pattern is rarely noticed by congregations, and yet without such recognition the hymn can scarcely be sung with the fullest intelligence—Richard Watson Gilder's "To Thee, Eternal Soul, be praise." It was begun during the Bicentennial of John Wesley's birth, celebrated at Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut, July 1, 1903. The principal address on that occasion was delivered by Woodrow Wilson, then president of Princeton University, formerly on the Wesleyan faculty; and the poem, entitled "John Wesley," was read by Dr. Gilder, then editor of the *Century Magazine*. When Dr. Gilder came to that portion of his poem that referred to his father, a Methodist minister, he was so choked with emotion that he stopped reading. Dr. James M. Buckley, on the platform, sprang forward and offered to finish reading it; but Dr. Gilder recovered himself and finished the poem with thrilling effect on all who heard it. That night Gilder was a guest in the home of Caleb T. Winchester, professor of English Literature, who was active on the Hymnal Commission, then making the *Methodist Hymnal* of 1905. He urged Gilder to write a hymn for that book; and "To Thee, Eternal Soul" was the result, begun that night and completed on his return to New York.

Deeply impressed by Woodrow Wilson's thought that God had used Wesley to further his purposes for eighteenth-century England, and

still stirred by the memory of his own father's devoted service, the poet took this for the theme of his hymn—God's use of human instrumentalities to reveal to the world his *light*, his *love*, his *word*. About those three elements the pattern of the hymn is constructed.

In the first stanza the poet praises God for using men ("saints and prophets") through whom to send "thy light, thy love, thy word":

To thee, Eternal Soul, be praise!  
Who, from of old to our own days,  
Through souls of saints and prophets, Lord,  
Hast sent thy light, thy love, thy word.

In the next three stanzas, each introduced by the words, "We thank thee," he declares that men have been used of God to show forth each of these three divine gifts. God's *light* shines through men, both great and humble (in the second stanza):

We thank thee for each mighty one  
Through whom thy living light hath shone;  
And for each humble soul and sweet  
That lights to heaven our wandering feet.

God's *love* is made real through the unselfish service of saintly men (third stanza):

We thank thee for the love divine  
Made real in every saint of thine;  
That boundless love itself that gives  
In service to each soul that lives.

God's *word* has come to us through the voices of prophetic men (fourth stanza):

We thank thee for the word of might  
Thy Spirit spake in darkest night,  
Spake through the trumpet voices loud  
Of prophets at thy throne who bowed.

After thus devoting one stanza to each of these three gifts of God, the poet in the final stanza again links all three—this time in a climactic prayer that God may use us as his servants:

Eternal Soul, our souls keep pure,  
That like thy saints we may endure;  
Forever through thy servants, Lord,  
Send thou thy light, thy love, thy word.

Just as the three inner stanzas begin with the same four words, so also the phrase "Eternal Soul" is common to the two outer stanzas.

This pattern has cohesion, symmetry, beauty, and logic. To those who see it the hymn is crystal clear. But how many miss this until it is

called to their attention! Dr. Milton S. Littlefield, while editing *Hymns of the Christian Life*, proceeded on the principle that no hymn should be printed with more than four stanzas. This hymn has five. Therefore, in his hymnal he eliminated the fourth stanza (on the prophet's function). When the book was published, I objected to this deletion, calling his attention to the violence he had done to the poem's perfect pattern. He was greatly chagrined, protesting that he had never sensed the pattern, else he would never have omitted that stanza, so essential to the continuity of the hymn's logic. If a hymn pattern is not self-evident to a skilled hymnbook editor, how much less is it likely to be to the average congregational singer, unless his pastor or some other leader points out to him the plan on which its thought is constructed.

Another hymn pattern, elusive to the average worshiper, but essential to his full appreciation of the thought of the hymn, is the form we arbitrarily call the *Hebrew pattern*, because of its frequent and effective use by the Hebrew poets. It involves the conventional threefold plan: thesis, antithesis, synthesis. The thesis contemplates God in his omnipotence, his never-ending life, his perfection of holiness, his immeasurable love. The antithesis presents in contrast man's weakness, his ephemeral life, his imperfection and sinfulness, his rebellion. In the synthesis man's weakness is caught up into God's omnipotence, his mortality into divine immortality, his sinfulness into God's holiness, and his rebellion into reconciliation with God.

Dean Willard L. Sperry<sup>2</sup> has pointed out that the historic orders in Christian worship follow this pattern, whether in the Catholic Mass, the Anglican Prayer Book, or the American Prayer Book: he might well now add also, in the Methodist Orders of Worship, Nos. 1, 3, and 4, the last being based on the Sunday Service of John Wesley. He also shows how the psalmists followed this pattern in Psalms 90:1-17, Psalms 92:1-11, Psalms 139:1-24; Isaiah, in 6:1-4 (thesis), 5 (antithesis), 6-8 (synthesis); and even some New Testament writers, in John 1:11-14, I Corinthians 13, and II Corinthians 4:6-18.

Of the many hymns employing this pattern, the most widely sung is Watts's "O God, our help in ages past," which F. J. Gilman has called "the great ceremonial hymn of the English nations." In the *Methodist Hymnal* of 1905, seven stanzas are given. The first four of these stanzas constitute the thesis, contemplating the eternal attributes of Deity. The first stanza is:

<sup>2</sup> *Reality in Worship*, by Willard L. Sperry. The Macmillan Company, 1925.

O God, our help in ages past,  
 Our hope for years to come,  
 Our shelter from the stormy blast,  
 And our eternal home!

The second stanza, beginning, "Under the shadow of thy throne," declares the omnipotence of God; and the third and fourth stanzas, beginning respectively, "Before the hills in order stood" and "A thousand ages, in thy sight," sing of the eternal life of God. In the antithesis, stanzas five and six, all this is dramatically contrasted with man's futile weakness and the brevity of his life:

The busy tribes of flesh and blood,  
 With all their cares and fears,  
 Are carried downward by the flood,  
 And lost in following years.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream,  
 Bears all its sons away;  
 They fly, forgotten as a dream  
 Dies at the opening day.

The last stanza, which is the synthesis, rounds out the pattern and presents the eternal God as our help, our hope, our guide, our home:

O God, our help in ages past,  
 Our hope for years to come;  
 Be thou our guide while life shall last,  
 And our eternal home.

In the *Methodist Hymnal* of 1935 this hymn contains only five stanzas. Stanzas five and six, comprising the antithesis, have been omitted, thus completely destroying the pattern in Psalms 90 on which the hymn was based.

Bishop Bickersteth's majestic hymn "O God, the Rock of Ages" follows the Hebrew pattern. The thesis is in the first stanza, dwelling on the everlasting life of God:

O God, the Rock of Ages,  
 Who evermore hast been,  
 What time the tempest rages,  
 Our dwelling place serene;  
 Before thy first creation,  
 O Lord, the same as now,  
 To endless generations,  
 The everlasting thou!

With this divine eternity is sharply contrasted man's brief life, in the antithetical second stanza:

## RELIGION IN LIFE

Our years are like the shadows  
 On sunny hills that lie,  
 Or grasses in the meadows  
 That blossom but to die:  
 A sleep, a dream, a story  
 By strangers quickly told,  
 An unremaining glory  
 Of things that soon are old.

Man's frail mortality is lifted up into God's perfect life in the synthesis, consisting of the third stanza ("O Thou, who canst not slumber") and the fourth:

Lord, crown our faith's endeavor  
 With beauty and with grace,  
 Till, clothed in light forever,  
 We see thee face to face:  
 A joy no language measures;  
 A fountain brimming o'er;  
 An endless flow of pleasures;  
 An ocean without shore.

Dean Sperry cites other hymns of this Hebrew pattern: Oliver Wendell Holmes's "O Love divine that stooped to share" with thesis in the first stanza, antithesis in the second and third, and synthesis in the fourth; William Cowper's "O for a closer walk with God," thesis stanza 1, antithesis stanzas 2 and 3, synthesis in the last three; "Father, in thy mysterious presence," the three stanzas in order representing the three parts of this pattern. The evening hymns, he says, often follow the sequence: (a) evening, (b) night, (c) morning, with the same emotional contrasts as in the Hebrew pattern—the beauty of evening, the black depths of midnight, the joy of morning (e.g., "Saviour, breathe an evening blessing," "Now the day is over," "Sun of my soul").

The alert student can trace the Hebrew pattern in many other hymns than those cited by Dean Sperry, for instance: "Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove" by Isaac Watts and "O holy city, seen of John" by Walter R. Bowie. Dr. Frank Mason North in his great lyrical hymn on social service, "Where cross the crowded ways of life," developed a perfect example of the Hebrew pattern with his thesis entirely within the first stanza, ending with the line, "We hear thy voice, O Son of man!" At once begins the contrasting second stanza:

In haunts of wretchedness and need,  
 On shadowed thresholds dark with fears.

The antithesis continues through the second, third, and fourth stanzas. But a glorious synthesis is expressed in the last two stanzas:

O Master, from the mountain side,  
 Make haste to heal these hearts of pain;  
 Among these restless throngs abide,  
 O tread the city's streets again;  
 Till sons of men shall learn thy love  
 And follow where thy feet have trod;  
 Till, glorious from thy heaven above,  
 Shall come the city of our God!

Canon John Ellerton's hymn, "The Lord be with us," uses a pattern that takes us through the Sabbath day: stanza 1, in church; 2, on the way home; 3, through the rest of the day; 4, through the night. His hymn, "Saviour, again to thy dear name we raise," presents a similar sequence.

The examples already cited, except the conversational pattern, are patterns that involve the whole hymn. A different type, however, reveals a pattern that is complete within one stanza and is repeated in each subsequent stanza. Dr. Milton S. Littlefield's morning hymn, "Come, O Lord, like morning sunlight," is a beautiful illustration of this. In the first line of each stanza some phenomenon in nature is used in simile. The second line describes its function. The third and fourth lines pray that God may exercise that function in our souls. This pattern may be kept in mind while singing the hymn:

Come, O Lord, like morning sunlight,  
 Making all life new and free;  
 For the daily task and challenge  
 May we rise renewed in thee.

Come, O Lord, like ocean flood-tides,  
 Flowing inland from the sea;  
 As the waters fill the shallows,  
 May our souls be filled with thee.

Come, O Lord, like mountain breezes,  
 Fresh'ning life in vale and lea;  
 In the heat and stress of duty  
 May our souls find strength in thee.

Come, O Lord, like evening twilight,  
 Bringing peace on land and sea;  
 At the radiant close of labor  
 May our souls find rest in thee.

James Edmeston's "Saviour, breathe an evening blessing" shows a pattern of contrasts between ill and good. After the first two lines, the first stanza contrasts "sin and want" with healing:

Sin and want we come confessing:  
Thou canst save and thou canst heal.

Subsequent stanzas develop similar contrasts: the second, destruction vs. safety; the third, dreariness vs. God's care; the fourth, death vs. resurrection.

"Be still, my soul," sung to Sibelius' "Finlandia," pursues a pattern that may be represented thus:

| Stanza        | 1st 3 lines   | 4th line                     | 5th and 6th lines                       |
|---------------|---|------------------------------|---|
| 1. "Be still" | patience<br>in <i>pain</i>                                | "He faithful<br>will remain" | "Be still"—<br>followed by a<br>promise |
| 2. "Be still" | freedom<br>from <i>fear</i>                               | "All shall<br>be bright"     |   |
| 3. "Be still" | hope in immor-<br>tality removes<br><i>disappointment</i> | "Love's<br>joys restored"    |   |

The *litany pattern* is illustrated by the hymns, "By thy birth and by thy tears" by Robert Grant, "Jesus, with thy Church abide" by Thomas B. Pollock, and "For all the blessings of the year" by Albert H. Hutchinson. In all of these, each stanza is concluded with a phrase, offering prayer to God. The traditional litany is a responsive prayer, consisting of an utterance by the minister, to which all the people make reply in unison. This form is evident in Robert Grant's hymn:

By Thy birth and by Thy tears,  
By Thy human griefs and fears,  
By Thy conflict in the hour  
Of the subtle tempter's power:

(Response) Saviour, look with pitying eye;  
Saviour, help me or I die.

Here, as usually in a litany, the response is of a penitential character. In the second of these litany hymns, however, the response is "We beseech thee, hear us"; in the third it is "We thank thee, Lord." This hymn form lends itself to effective antiphonal singing.

A *pattern of paradoxes*, startling and effective, is employed in George Matheson's hymn:

Make me a captive, Lord,  
And then I shall be free;  
Force me to render up my sword,  
And I shall conqueror be.

These paradoxes are multiplied in almost every couplet throughout the hymn in a manner suggesting the paradoxical sixth stanza of Charles Wesley's "O for a thousand tongues to sing":

Hear him, ye deaf; his praise, ye dumb,  
Your loosened tongues employ;  
Ye blind, behold your Saviour come;  
And leap, ye lame, for joy.

The story of the Wise Men, visiting the baby Jesus, is recalled in the hymn, "As with gladness men of old," by William C. Dix. In each of the first three stanzas, incidents of their quest are recounted in the first few lines, and then in later lines of each stanza their acts are set forth as an example for us: "As did they"—"So may we." The pattern diverges in the fourth stanza with a prayer to "Keep us in the narrow way."

J. Edgar Park's hymn, each stanza beginning with the words of the Greeks to Philip just before the Passover, "We would see Jesus," through successive stanzas follows the outlines of Christ's life and ministry.

William C. Dix's "Come unto me, ye weary" carries out strictly in each stanza this outline: first two lines, quotation of Christ's words; third and four lines, description of his voice; fifth to eighth lines, the message of the divine voice.

In considering hymn patterns it is worth while to note that, while there are a great many hymn-tunes that show a close emotional correspondence with the hymns to which they are sung, it is almost impossible to find a tune whose musical pattern follows the pattern of its hymn. Above we have mentioned one exception to this, "St. Andrew of Crete," the tune to "Christian, dost thou see them." We feel constrained to cite one other exception, because it is so very unusual—Dr. Dykes's tune, "Vox Dilecti," to Horatius Bonar's "I heard the voice of Jesus say." In the hymn pattern the first half of each stanza expresses in the words of Jesus the pitiful plight of the soul: first stanza, weariness; second stanza, thirst; third stanza, darkness. In the second half of each stanza, as "I came to Jesus," for weariness I found "in him a resting-place," for thirst a "life-giving stream," for darkness "my star, my sun"—the "light of life." In following this pattern musically, the first half of the tune

is in the minor mode and is marked by a hesitant, groping rhythm; the second half is in the major mode and progresses with a joyous, triumphant rhythm.

The student of hymn patterns would find it profitable to examine in detail the patterns of the following hymns: James Montgomery's "Angels, from the realms of glory," noting the contrast of tenses in each stanza; John H. Hopkins's Christmas carol, "We three Kings of Orient are," wherein all three kings sing the first stanza, each king in turn sings one of the next three and all join in the last; Samuel Longfellow's "Holy Spirit, Truth divine," the four stanzas respectively personifying the Holy Spirit as *Truth*, *Love*, *Power*, and *Right*, adding a prayer suited to each of these attributes; Earl Marlatt's "Spirit of Life, in this new dawn," following much the same pattern as that shown in the preceding hymn; George Matheson's "O Love that wilt not let me go," presenting a distinct consequence of fulfillment in the last two lines of each stanza.

As an exercise in detecting patterns, a study might well be made of the thought and plan of each of these hymns: Edward R. Sill's "Send down thy truth, O God," William W. How's "O Jesus, thou art standing," Frances R. Havergal's "Take my life, and let it be," William H. Burleigh's "Lead us, O Father," Bishop Doane's "Thou art the Way," Canon Ellerton's "This is the day of light," Samuel Johnson's "Life of ages, richly poured," William H. Parker's "Holy Spirit, hear us," James D. Burns's "Hushed was the evening hymn," and Henry H. Tweedy's missionary hymn, "Eternal God, whose power upholds."

The habit of studying hymn patterns should prove rewarding to the minister, and also to his people, if he will make it his business to encourage them to sing Christian hymns, not only with their voices, but also with clear spiritual understanding. Some pastors in a series of midweek meetings or congregational hymn-singing rehearsals have found it possible to awaken a more intelligent interest in the hymns by reciting stories of their origin or their use, giving sketches of their authors and explaining their message in detail. Such occasions should afford opportunity to trace the patterns of the hymns and fix them in the memories of the people, so that the sequence of hymnic logic and the inner meaning of a hymn will be awakened in their minds every time thereafter that they sing the hymn. Thus will the sacred function of a true hymn be more fully realized—the filling of the mind with Godward thoughts and the stirring of the heart with spiritual emotions.

## "Christian Perfection"—A Theological Reprint

John Fletcher (1729-1785)

Jean Guillaume de la Flechère, born in Switzerland, came to England in 1752, was converted to Methodism, and became Vicar of Madeley. Preacher, able theologian, and saint, he was designated by John Wesley in 1773 as his successor in the leadership of the Methodist Church. But Wesley outlived Fletcher, and preached his funeral sermon.

Fletcher published several volumes of theological doctrine and controversy, notably the *Equal Check to Pharisaism and Antinomianism*. The prayer here reprinted is from a long out-of-print booklet, "Christian Perfection: Being an Extract from the Rev. John Fletcher's Treatise on that Subject." It is a spark from the living flame of early Methodist devotion.

"**FAITH** always works by love,—by love of desire, at least; making us ardently pray for what we believe to be eminently desirable. And if Christian perfection appears so to you, you might, perhaps, express your earnest desire of it in some such words as these: 'How long, Lord, shall my soul, thy spiritual temple, be a den of thieves, or a house of merchandise? How long shall vain thoughts profane it, as the buyers and sellers profaned thy temple made with human hands? How long shall evil tempers lodge within me? How long shall unbelief, formality, hypocrisy, envy, hankering after sensual pleasure, indifference to spiritual delights, and backwardness to painful or ignominious duty, harbor there? How long shall these sheep and doves, yea, these goats and serpents, defile my breast, which should be pure as the Holy of holies? How long shall they hinder me from being one of the worshipers whom thou seekest; one of those who worship thee in spirit and in truth? O help me to take away these cages of unclean birds! Suddenly come to thy temple! Turn out all that offends the eye of thy purity, and destroy all that keeps me out of the rest which remains for thy Christian people; so shall I keep a spiritual Sabbath, a Christian jubilee to the God of my life: so shall I witness my share in "the oil of joy," with which thou anointest perfect Christians above their fellow-believers.'"

"I stand in need of that oil, Lord. My lamp burns dim: sometimes it seems to be even gone out, as that of the foolish virgins: it is more like a smoking flax than a burning and shining light. O quench it not! Raise it to a flame! Thou knowest that I do believe in thee. The trembling hand of my faith holds thee; and though I have ten thousand times grieved thy pardoning love, thine everlasting arm is still under me to redeem my life from destruction; while thy right hand is over

me, to crown me with mercies and loving kindness. But alas! I am neither sufficiently thankful for thy present mercies, nor sufficiently athirst for thy future favors. Hence I feel an aching void in my soul, being conscious that I have not attained the heights of grace described in thy word, and enjoyed by thy holiest servants. Their deep experiences, the diligence and ardor with which they did thy will, the patience and fortitude with which they endured the cross, reproach me, and convince me of my manifold wants."

"I want 'power from on high'; I want the penetrating, lasting unction of the Holy One; I want to have my vessel, my capacious heart, full of the oil which makes the countenance of wise virgins cheerful; I want a lamp of heavenly illumination, and a fire of divine love, burning day and night in my breast, as the typical lamps did in the temple, and the sacred fire on the altar; I want a full application of the blood which cleanses from all sin, and a strong faith in thy sanctifying word,—a faith by which thou mayest dwell in my heart, as the unwavering hope of glory, and the fixed object of my love; I want the internal oracle,—thy still, small voice, together with Urim and Thummim,<sup>1</sup> the new name 'which none knoweth but he that receiveth it'; in a word, Lord, I want a plentitude of thy Spirit, the full promise of the Father, and the rivers which flow from the inmost soul of the believers who have gone on to the perfection of thy dispensation."

"I do believe that thou canst and wilt thus 'baptize me with the Holy Ghost and with fire': help my unbelief; confirm and increase my faith, with regard to this important baptism. Lord, I have need to be thus baptized of thee, and I am straitened till this baptism is accomplished. By thy baptism of tears in the manger, of water in Jordan, of sweat in Gethsemane, of blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke, and flaming wrath on Calvary, baptize, O baptize my soul, and make as full an end of the original sin which I have from Adam, as thy last baptism made of 'the likeness of sinful flesh' which thou hadst from a daughter of Eve."

"Some of thy people look at death for full salvation from sin; but, at thy command, Lord, I look unto thee. 'Say to my soul, I am thy salvation'; and let me feel in my heart, as well as see with my understanding, that thou canst save from sin to the uttermost all that come to God through thee. I am tired of forms, professions, and orthodox

<sup>1</sup>Two Hebrew words, which mean, "Lights and Perfections."

notions, so far as they are not pipes or channels to convey life, light, and love to my dead, dark, and stony heart. Neither the plain letter of thy gospel, nor the sweet foretastes and transient illuminations of thy Spirit, can satisfy the large desires of my faith. Give me thine abiding Spirit, that he may continually shed abroad thy love in my soul. Come, O Lord, with that blessed Spirit! come, thou and thy Father, in that holy Comforter! come to make your abode with me; or I shall go meekly mourning to my grave!"

"Blessed mourning! Lord, increase it! I had rather wait in tears for thy fullness than wantonly waste the fragments of thy spiritual bounties, or feed with Laodicean contentment upon the tainted manna of my former experiences. Righteous Father, I hunger and thirst after thy righteousness! Send thy Holy Spirit of promise to fill me therewith, to sanctify me throughout, and to seal me centrally to the day of eternal redemption and finished salvation. Not for works of righteousness which I have done, but of thy mercy, for Christ's sake, save thou me by the complete washing of regeneration, and the full renewing of the Holy Ghost. And, in order to this, pour out of thy Spirit; shed it abundantly on me, till the fountain of living water abundantly spring up in my soul, and I can say, in the full sense of the words, that thou livest in me, that my life is hid with thee in God, and that my spirit is returned to him that gave it,—to thee, the First and the Last, my Author and my End, my God and my all."

## A Review of the Quarter's Fiction

JOHN C. SCHROEDER

I HAVE FREQUENTLY sought to make a case for novel reading. Novels mirror the times, they portray human nature, they often probe beneath history, etc. But it may equally be true that novel reading is a vicious habit, which the addict forever rationalizes, but which actually slowly destroys his literary taste and even his moral values. Are any significant novels being written now? Can they compare with Hardy and Meredith and Jane Austen and Dickens? My impression is that most of the stories I have recently read will be forgotten in a year. They flick away like a newsreel and have as much significance. Nevertheless, they are a product of our time and come from the pens of those who tell our story and seek to express our longings. Not one of these stories gets far beneath life's surface nor does any one of them reveal any religious insight.

After the last war *What Price Glory?* and *Journey's End* reflected a moral reaction against the brutality and the impersonality of army life. *Command Decision* does a comparable thing for this war. It is an engrossing, exciting, and well-written story about the Eighth Air Force. Brockhurst, a snooping war correspondent, worms his way into the headquarters of General K. C. (Casey) Dennis. The general has been sending his men over Germany to destroy factories which are producing planes which will be faster than the American ships. "Operation Stitch" means many casualties since the bombers go beyond fighter protection. Casey Dennis looks to Brockhurst like "a Fascist megalomaniac," ruthless with his men and indifferent to the cost of his raids. Major General Kane, his superior, has to satisfy the public and a congressional committee that losses are not too great. A bombastic Southern congressman on a tour of inspection is demanding Dennis' removal. The story moves to an exciting climax which reveals that Dennis is a "man who knows what he has to do" and is not impervious to its cost. The general is a man caught in an insoluble ethical dilemma. "It was futile to pity Dennis, to hate Kane, to rage . . . at the Army's bestial stupidity and human venality; they were all manifestations of what had made them. It was not the weakness, the faults, the mistakes of armies; it was their existence that proclaimed the tragedy of mankind."

*Lydia Bailey* may not be up to some of Kenneth Roberts' other historical novels, but it again reveals his skill as a story-teller and craftsman. He works so hard with the background of his stories so that all the detail of the life of the time appears; how people lived, made their money, grew their produce, traveled, sailed boats, reared children, and a thousand other details.

This story revolves about the campaign of the French in Haiti against Toussaint and the war with the Barbary pirates which ends with the battle of Derna. Here again, I am sure, the historical detail must be accurate. The narrator of the tale, Albion Hamlin, is a young New Englander who follows his love about the world and as a result is enmeshed in all these fantastic adventures. The villain of the piece is Tobias Lear, who had once been Washington's secretary and who plays the political game to the hilt, confounding the simple-minded but noble warriors who are fighting for the rights of the new nation. The affair in Haiti is a lurid tale. The protagonists are Toussaint, Henri Christophe, and the toadlike Dessalines. Albion there finds a friend, King Dick, a fabulous creature, who is his comrade through all the terror and excitement of the Haitian campaign as well as through the African war. The book is far too long and the reader gets weary with the strategy of the campaign against the Barbary pirates. However, this is first-rate historical fiction, written with a care for detail. The plot is almost incidental to the events described. In fact, it seems merely a device to get Albion from one place to another. But once he arrives the narrative is vivid and the tale skillfully told.

*Private Angelo* at first seems like a book which tries to be amusing about a campaign whose bitterness and cruelty were too terrible to permit even a chuckle. The war in Italy after the Allied landings was a horrible business. Angelo is an Italian soldier who does not possess the *dona di coraggio*, however attractive he may be to the two women whom he loves. He deserts the Italians, he fights with the British, he is caught in all sorts of dangers, and through it all he has but one motive—"For we have learnt the most useful of all accomplishments, which is to survive." There is no nobility or conviction in Angelo. Allegiance means nothing to him. Yet perhaps he is more typical than we think. At least he seems representative of the Italian soldier as he was described to us.

Whatever may be our repugnance at following the adventures of such a reprobate, his adventure is amusing, human, and tolerant. He has

been brought up by the Count of Portofiore, a hedonistic Don Juan who manipulates black markets and manages to keep himself safe from danger.

This description might seem to indicate that such a tale about worthless people is all too trivial. But the conversations while artificial are brilliant, witty, and wise. The situations, while amusing, are touched with the realism of simple, harmless people who have been manhandled too often to seek anything else except a little security. There are very good stories and sparkling comments in this book, however deplorable it may seem to be to make a hero of a deserter.

*The Rise of Henry Morcar* is a solid, substantial, unimaginative book about a solid, substantial, unimaginative Englishman. It is well written and well conceived. Henry Morcar, brought up in the textile trades, determines to be successful. He does his bit in the World War. He works hard to build up a thriving business, losing on the way the loves and comradeships which give life savor. Then he falls in love with an associate's wife, and there gather about him a group of young people with whose fortunes his own life becomes knit. He survives the blitz and faces a bleak future still determined that hard work and enterprise will solve the nation's hurt. Now all this seems stodgy and pedestrian; but Miss Bentley writes well and Henry Morcar is a convincing character whose life reflects the history of the period through which he lives.

*Dunkerley's* is another story about the successful Englishman who lived through the preceding generation. It is a sequel to *Hard Facts*, which describes the beginning of Dan Dunkerley's career. While the book is not as good as some of Mr. Spring's earlier novels, it nevertheless reveals his skill as a story-teller. Here again appears Theo Chrystal, the young clergyman who is destined to be a bishop. Bland, competent, and handsome, Theo is typical of the urbane and tolerant parson who never makes a false step. Having buried his first wife, he takes a second, Grace Satterfield, with whom he will move along to a respected position of ecclesiastical leadership. But the heart of the story is to be found in the tragic love of the brilliant Alec Dilworth for Hesba Lewison. This is a moving tale and, while there is nothing great about the book, it is well done.

I am greatly puzzled about *The Wayward Bus*. Perhaps one expects too much of John Steinbeck. Perhaps there is hidden beneath the story profound insights. On the surface it is nothing more than a slight adventure of some ill-assorted people who are riding in a bus and who seem able to think of nothing else but sex with a capital S.

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Across from the title page is a quotation from "Everyman." The front bumper of the bus had once had the legend "*El Gran Poder de Jesus*" painted on it. But superimposed is its present name, "Sweetheart," with the former legend but a faint palimpsest. All this may indicate that the tale is an allegory depicting the decadent nature of our civilization. The people in the bus are types. The only one worth anything is Juan Chicoy, the driver. He is at least a man with some dreams. "There aren't very many of them in the world, as everyone finds out sooner or later." The rest of the characters probably are supposed to typify the deadly sins. Alice Chicoy is neurotic and alcoholic. Mr. Pritchard, the businessman, is greedy; his wife is frigid and spoiled; his daughter is athletic and frustrated. Norma, the waitress, dreams only of Hollywood and "Pimples" Carson is a pathetic lad who responds to kindness like a kicked puppy and to love in the same way. Camille is sex integrated from infinity to infinity. The story is well told but the plot is commonplace and the characterizations not too vivid. The book has none of the strength of *The Grapes of Wrath*. As an allegory, it is a revelation of human depravity.

*The Fair Field* is not a novel. It is a series of vignettes, describing the life of the little village of Elmbury in our own time. There are all sorts of people there and they come alive in Moore's prose. Their activities are simple—fishing, playing cricket, the games of children, drinking in The Swan Inn. This is the solid English life which has endured for centuries. The book is a sociological document of great insight. Moore's theory is that people of different nations can understand one another through their commonality of experience in village life since the village speaks a universal language. "It may be that the country towns and villages will be for a period the repositories (like the monasteries of the Dark Ages) of a certain way of life, a certain sort of culture, while the great cities go mad." This is a mellow, gentle book. The life described is not always pretty nor the people good. But they are bound together in a culture which gives relevance to their experience. One wonders how long it can survive.

**Command Decision.** By WILLIAM W. HAINES. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1947. pp. 258. \$2.50.

**Lydia Bailey.** By KENNETH ROBERTS. New York: Doubleday & Co., 1947. pp. 488. \$3.00.

**Private Angelo.** By ERIC LINKLATER. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1946. pp. 267. \$2.75.

**The Rise of Henry Morcar.** By PHYLLIS BENTLEY. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1946. pp. 415. \$3.00.

**Dunkerley's.** By HOWARD SPRING. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947. pp. 246. \$2.50.

**The Wayward Bus.** By JOHN STEINBECK. New York: The Viking Press, 1947. pp. 312. \$2.75.

**The Fair Field.** By JOHN MOORE. Introduction by Irwin Edman. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1946. pp. 240. \$2.75.

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## Book Reviews

The Interseminary Series. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946.

Vol. I. *The Church and Organized Movements*. Edited by Randolph Crump Miller. pp. xvi-255. \$1.50.

Vol. II. *The Challenge of Our Culture*. Edited by Clarence Tucker Craig. pp. xvi-205. \$1.50.

Vol. III. *The Gospel, The Church, and The World*. Edited by Kenneth Scott Latourette. pp. xvi-229. \$1.50.

Vol. IV. *Toward World-Wide Christianity*. Edited by O. Frederick Nolde. pp. xvi-263. \$1.50.

The general preface defines the aim and scope of these four volumes as "To outline the character of the contemporary world which challenges the Church; to proclaim afresh the nature of the Gospel and the Church which must meet that challenge; and to set forth the claims which ecumenical Christianity makes upon the various churches as they face their world task." The immediate public for the series are theological students who will be meeting in conference this year, but the authors have obviously and wisely had a larger and more general Christian audience in mind.

The symposium method of signed contributions always puts a certain strain on the reader, but the weaknesses of the method have, in this case, been mitigated by the fact that the writers have met frequently and share, in a very large degree, a common mind. Careful higher criticism would reveal overlappings, discordances, and one or two contradictions. It is a pity that the meaning of some terms was not more carefully discussed and agreed upon, particularly that small and hard-worked bunch of words, "community," "culture," "freedom," which might, with advantage, be abolished from the vocabulary of every Christian writer for at least a year. The most pleasing essays in the volumes are those in which the writer, keeping his group in mind, writes with a flash of original and personal insight. There are half a dozen such, but this reviewer is not going to encourage selective reading by mentioning them.

The first two volumes are devoted to the first objective mentioned above. How far, when we have read them, do we feel that we have understood the contemporary world better for seeing it through the eyes of these Christian men?

In the first volume the first three essays deal with what the group has clearly decided to be three chief characteristics of the modern age—machines, power, race. The fourth deals with the effect of these on individuals. The fifth is a diagnosis of the spirit underlying our culture, and the last describes the inroads of secularism on the life of church congregations.

Much in the first essay is not new, but it is said with drive and power. Professor Haroutunian rightly fastens on the ubiquity of *organization* as the most marked characteristic of the machine age. One could wish that his solemn warning that "a recognition of oneself as mass man number one is indispensable for effective wrestling with this terrifying monster of our time" had been remembered throughout the four volumes, for there is a tendency to forget that Christians in this mortal life look at society perforce from the inside.

The second essay follows logically. Power is the struggle between groups to be the organizers. Something might usefully have been said here or elsewhere about education, which in modern society is one of the chief steppingstones to power and, as such, liable to distortion and corruption.

Myths of race, as the third essay points out, are easy means to wield power without a struggle by solidifying the status quo and resisting change. It is a pity here that the group allowed themselves to be lured into imagining a "color war" with Russia as a neutral (p. 101ff.). Indeed, overtones and exaggerations seem to this reviewer to creep into many American Christian discussions on race. It is not that the prophets are wrong, but that they scream a little too loudly for clear hearing.

The sixth essay on the spirit of our culture ought to be the pivotal chapter in the field covered by the first two books and, as such, it is the group's most difficult task. Professor Wilder's impossible undertaking—a discussion of the spirit of our culture in thirty-two pages—would have been easier if there had been, elsewhere in the books, a thoroughgoing study of science which did proper justice both to the spirit and to the achievements of the scientific movement. Perhaps Roman Catholics can justifiably bemoan the disintegration of the Middle Ages. Protestants cannot do this, for Protestantism is the spirit of the last 400 years. The other flower of Protestantism, democratic politics, receives no attention at all, either here or elsewhere. There are some comments on political theory in the last essay, but nowhere is the influence of the Protestant mind on the growth of our democratic political and legal institutions given adequate treatment. Lacking a discussion of these two great achievements of the Protestant era, the chapter on the spirit of our culture becomes a lament. What is said is true and penetrating, but it is not all.

A separate chapter is given to personal tensions in modern life. Probably this should come at the end. Why all this fuss and worry about a mass society, the struggle for power, lost values, and the like? It is because the free man and woman to whom the gospel is addressed have been dwarfed and made insignificant by modern society. Modern man's tragedy is not to be measured, as it is here, in terms of mental breakdowns and psychological disorders, distressing as they may be. The tragedy is measured in the countless unfulfilled lives, in the men who live without living, and without knowing that they do not live. Do not Christian insight and Christian vocabulary provide a far more powerful vehicle for expressing this vast human tragedy than modern psychology?

It is a terrifying thought that our standard of normality may already have become the mass man, the man who "does not think his own thoughts, who is everywhere, in every stratum of our society" (p. 26), who never gets near a psychiatrist because he is adjusted to life at a subhuman level. This presents the most penetrating challenge of modern life to the gospel; for it may be that that in man to which the gospel is addressed, is itself withering away.

The second volume deals in more detail with the society in which the church finds itself. It is a pity that the volume is conceived on a somewhat wooden principle of trying to discover which movements and organizations supply the church with "resource" and which offer it "resistance." Along this line of argument we might easily be led to the conclusion that welfare work is a bad thing because it tends to occupy people's time and keep them away from church, while Nazi occupation was a good thing because (as in Holland) it sharpened the issues for Christians and

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brought the church to life. But, this criticism having been made, there is much valuable material in the book. An English reader found the account of leftist groups and labor movements lucid and interesting. In England there has been no study made of organized fraternalism. Within the limits of space it is well done here, as is the chapter on the cults. It seems a pity to give a chapter to the fascist masquerade, now discredited, but none to the relation of the churches to ordinary politics.

The chapter on welfare work might have been one of the most important in the book. The section on historical perspective, by sheer contraction alone, gets out of perspective. There are startling omissions. The omission of Robert Raikes and his Ragged Schools out of which grew the whole modern Sunday-school movement, and of the eighteenth-century Charity School movement, perhaps indicate what happens when a given territory is cut up too nicely between contributors to a symposium. The main road into the problem of poverty was through education. Perhaps that was considered to be outside this contributor's beat; but leaving that aside, the concentration on charity as the sole pattern of welfare work leads to grave omission without which the modern social scene can scarcely make sense. On that line of argument the welfare state is state charity, bread and circuses brought up to date. What is missing is the long history of self-help of the poor by the poor (much older than the C.O.S.), the Co-ops (founded in 1845), the Friendly Societies, Thrift and Provident Clubs. When this trend is put in, alongside that of almsgiving by the rich to the poor, then we see the welfare state as it appears in the eyes of most British working people—a highly organized and centralized form of self-help, not the charity state but the insurance state.

The reviewer turned to the third volume prepared to be bored. There is nothing much duller than agreed statements on revelation and the nature of the church. All writers on these themes quote too much and remind us poor readers of our previous failures to come to grips with these important subjects in the language of Christian writing. We know it is all true and all important, but somehow it passes us by. We wonder whether we can see ourselves talking that stuff at church meeting in Zion Congregational round the corner—which, after all, is the test of all writing about the church.

The right word for Part I of this book is, therefore, "competent."

The second part deals with the church and society. Professor Latourette gives us perhaps a little more hopeful invigoration than we deserve. No doubt it is right to measure the progress of the church by size, distribution, and eminent adherents; but what if the reverse were true, that in spite of all this the position of Christianity in the world is at this moment precarious? In the previous volume insufficient attention is paid to the power of Marxism as a religious faith, of scientific materialism as an outlook on life, and—connected with both of these—of historical materialism, growing powerful in Europe, which sees history as all economics and economics as only power. Has Christianity ever had to face such deadly rivals as it confronts today in the attitudes which often, unlabeled and unacknowledged, grip the minds and imaginations of countless men and women and provide the true but unacknowledged basis of action even for many in our churches? Against the first of these three claimants for men's loyalty, Marxist communism, the Roman Catholic Church has declared unceasing war. Although Professor Latourette, from his side of the Atlantic, may remark that the Roman Catholic Church is suffering severe blows

which may reduce it to a declining force in the fortunes of mankind, from this side of the Atlantic it looks as though "Christianity versus communism" may soon become "Vatican versus Moscow." Where, then, do Protestants take their stand?

It is impossible not to single out the remaining two chapters in this section by Richard Niebuhr and John C. Bennett. They take a clean, sharp knife and cut near to the core of our problem. The question raised in the last essay in Volume I should have been taken up and developed in Volume III. In Volume I, Professor Nichols makes the statement that the church "must be emancipated from this civilization to which it has become assimilated," but wants Christianity to be recognized as a frankly minority movement. He continues, "There must be a crystallizing of voluntary disciplined groups *within* the churches . . . to think through and live out a new voluntary Christian discipline . . . out of such efforts a common mind may crystallize with some rapidity" (Vol. I, p. 199).

Over against this, John Bennett warns, in Volume III, that minority movements achieve heightened religious devotion and moral zeal in the first generation, but "the second generation of self-righteous exclusiveness may be without compensation" (Vol. III, p. 138). It is a sad reflection that where, as in England, the churches can claim only a small minority, probably not more than fifteen per cent, within their membership, they sigh for larger numbers. In the United States, where the churches number almost half the population within their membership, there are hungerings for the minority movement and even the catacombs. Thus the sturdy realism of Richard Niebuhr, who sees that the churches cannot shake off their membership in the societies which they so largely created, is perhaps the right starting point for a decision on strategy which churches, consciously or unconsciously, are being compelled to take.

The fourth volume need not delay us long. There is much good factual material both on the separate churches of Protestantism and on the ecumenical movement. They confirm the reviewer's impression that, on the whole, Americans have come nearer to thinking ecumenically than any other people. This volume will quickly date. Nothing is more remarkable to an English visitor than the enthusiastic interest of American Christians in international affairs. The Christian mood in England is more sober, perhaps a little cynical. The significant statements on world order printed on pages 158-168 look a little differently to us. We are inclined to say "SOKOP" ("sounds O.K. on paper"). The vigor and idealism of the American mood is bound to meet checks, and the good and right insights that are in it will be clarified and then rewritten. The ecumenical movement too is at a turning point. The pent-up energies of the war years are breaking forth in an enthusiasm for international gatherings. After the meeting of the World Council in 1948, we must sit back and think—not of the next World Assembly, but of how we can further ecumenical interests within the context of our own work at home.

KATHLEEN BLISS

*The Christian News-Letter*, London, England.

**The Meeting of East and West. An Inquiry Concerning World Understanding.** By F. S. C. NORTHROP. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1946. pp. xxii-531. \$6.00.

A book on philosophy which attains an early wide circulation is a rarity. Yet that is the record of this volume by Professor Northrop. Its first two printings

were exhausted within a few weeks of publication and a third large printing became necessary to meet the demand. Some of its enthusiastic advocates have acclaimed the volume as epoch-making. It deals with one of the most urgent issues of our time, the achievement of a unified world. It is by a distinguished student and teacher of philosophy who has long specialized on the relation of philosophy to science and who has sought, through intimate companionship with its living representatives, to understand the thought of the Orient. Dr. Northrop has also spent much time in Mexico and has been stimulated by what he saw and heard in that country.

The problem to which the author is addressing himself is the achievement of the unity of the world by undergirding it with a common ideology. With a philosopher's enthusiasm for his subject he believes that cultures are determined by intellectual systems. For instance, he sees the United States as having been shaped largely by John Locke. World unity, he contends, can be attained by bringing into synthesis the basic conceptions of the West and the East. He recognizes that each of the two segments of the world presents a variety, but he maintains that each is characterized by a dominant principle. In the West this consists of what underlies the scientific method—the framing of theories or hypotheses by the mind, and the testing of them by observed facts. The East he believes to be governed by a direct apprehension of reality. On the one hand, in the Occident, are scientific and pragmatic values. On the other, in the Orient, are aesthetic and emotionally religious values. These, Dr. Northrop believes, can be welded together. The sciences and the humanities must be harmonized.

The book is brilliant, stimulating, and provocative. It abounds in generalizations as well as in concrete illustrations. It is enormously learned, particularly in the field of philosophy. The author has the passionate and contagious enthusiasm of a religious pioneer.

Yet I, for one, rise from the reading of the volume quite unconvinced by the conclusions, and irritated by what seems to me to be the cavalier treatment of facts. The author appears to have made his thesis a Procrustean bed and sought to constrain his facts to fit it. For instance, he greatly exaggerates the unity which he believes exists in the Orient. Basically, almost as great gulfs separate the cultures of China and of India as stand between those of India and the Occident. In spite of the fact that Buddhism, derived from India, has long been present in China, the mental attitudes of the intellectuals of the latter country have more in common with those of the United States than with those of India. The only unity in what is usually called the Orient is that it is not the Occident. Even within the Occident, as Dr. Northrop recognizes, striking differences exist—as between the Anglo-Saxon and the Latin segments and between communism and democracy.

Among the generalizations which are simply not true is the statement (p. 312) that Buddhism is as influential in China and Korea as is Confucianism. Dr. Northrop declares (p. 313) that Lao Tzu found in the ancient classics of China "precisely what the Buddha found in the ancient classics of India." This is, at best, highly debatable. He sees (p. 316) in the Chinese ideograph linguistic symbolism which points "toward a component in the nature of things which only immediate experience and continued contemplation can convey" and would find significance in the circumstance that the Chinese have no alphabet. Yet India, where he views this "immediate experience" as most marked, has alphabets and makes great use of them. It is not true (p. 330) that in the seventeenth century Taoism became

"the state religion" of China. Confucianism held that role. It is contrary to fact (p. 337) that it follows from the doctrines of Taoism and Confucianism "that there is no immortality of the concrete, local, determinate personality," for this is to forget or ignore the eight Taoist immortals, each with his distinctive individuality. It is surprising to read (p. 409) that Japanese Shinto is theistic, as are Judaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism. It is still more amazing, in view of the persecution of Christian missionaries by ardent adherents of Confucianism and Hinduism, to be told that these religions "welcome foreigners and missionaries in a thoroughly open-minded manner" (p. 410). The list of mistakes might be greatly lengthened. Some have no particular importance for the main issues, but are understandable slips in a book which covers so wide a range of geography, history, and thought. Others have to do with the basic contentions of the volume. Their presence in areas with which I have something of intimate familiarity makes me suspicious of sections where I can claim no special competence.

Moreover, the Christian here finds himself in the presence of an interpretation of the human scene which is very different from what he believes to be the truth. He misses the recognition of the sin which underlies man's misery and the redemption which is central in history.

With all the doubts which a careful reading brings, the book is undoubtedly stimulating and provocative. Even when he most vigorously disagrees, the reader is made to think.

KENNETH S. LATOURETTE

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**The World's Great Scriptures.** By LEWIS BROWNE (editor). New York: The Macmillan Company, 1946. pp. xvi-559. \$5.00.

**The Great Religions of the Modern World.** By EDWARD J. JURJI (editor). Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1946. pp. v-387. \$3.75.

In an age of interest in world religions these are two welcome volumes, both adding novelty to the large number of books already available in this field. Lewis Browne's book is a compilation of high spots in the scriptures of the living religions, plus collections from Babylonia and Egypt. In his characteristic way, he illustrates with lively pen drawings of his own. Each section has a short introduction imparting data about the founder (if there is one) and descriptive details about the "Bible" itself. The book is well printed; the selections are carefully chosen; as a whole the volume is enticing. I am sure it will find approach to many a college classroom. It deserves the attention of every teacher and student of world religions. Unfortunately, Shintoism is not mentioned. Jainism and Sikhism are also omitted. However, materials from the Apocrypha and the Talmud are included under Judaism. Browne explains his omissions by the fact that curtailment had to be made somewhere, and he wished to include only the most important religions.

Jurji's book will make an excellent supplement to Browne's anthology, since each chapter deals factually with a living religion. Each is written by an outstanding scholar: Lewis Hodous describes Confucianism and Taoism; John Clark Archer gives the data on Hinduism; August K. Reischauer writes on Buddhism; Daniel C. Holtom delineates Shinto; Edward J. Jurji, the editor, gives the chapter

on Islam; and Abraham A. Neuman describes Judaism. Three aspects of Christianity are presented: Eastern Orthodoxy by Joseph L. Hromadka, Roman Catholicism by Gerald G. Walsh, and Protestantism by John A. Mackay. In the back of the book a "Who's Who of Authors" tells, in detail, about the men who contribute to this important volume. After each religion a carefully chosen bibliography is given.

In the preface Dr. Jurji says that "the purpose of this book [is] to indicate the genius, development, and spiritual core of the major contemporary religions. This is also a study of religion in its relation to the world crisis. . . . It is hoped that the result of our concerted effort may provide a background of understanding to all who, as lay reader, historian, philosopher, comparative religionist, apologist, missionary, or parish minister, wish to approach the great religions in the light of their affirmations and impact upon human society and culture." To read the book is to feel that the volume has accomplished its purpose in admirable fashion.

Both of these books give a fresh, readable approach to the religions of the world. As a teacher of world religions in a classroom, I would find the use of them as supplementary texts an excellent way to introduce the field to my students. Especially will all students of world religions profit from the fine analyses made by the skilled scholars in the book edited by Dr. Jurji. In a time when the world is so closely knit together, ministers and laymen need to feel the obligation to know how other religious cultures feel and think. These two books will play a major role in aiding them in such an intellectual opportunity.

THOMAS S. KEPLER

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**While Time Remains.** By LELAND STOWE. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946. pp. 379. \$3.50.

With a twenty-year experience as war correspondent in Europe, Asia, and Latin America for background, Mr. Stowe sets forth a realistic picture of the world as it is today, and makes an impassioned plea for international unity.

The ills of our own country are first laid bare with a scalpel whose strokes are both deep and accurate—our inexperience in world affairs, lack of trained diplomats, our absorption in our machines and gadgets at the expense of political progress. If his probing into Soviet weaknesses is not so searching, one has the feeling that Mr. Stowe is less fearful of Russian expansion than he is of the failure of the democracies to rise to their full stature.

An entire chapter is given to fascism, another to communism, and still another to democracy. These systems are defined and described with clarity and sincerity.

The emergence of both Asiatic and European countries from feudal bondage—and the author describes it country by country—raises the question: "Will they turn to Russian communism or to democracy?" If to the latter, what form of democracy will it be? Mr. Stowe believes that the "middle ground" of socialism is the answer for both continents as they grope toward freedom for the masses and a better way of life.

The last part of the book is, to say the least, sobering. The military experts have little to offer except a nonstop race in atomic armaments, while the scientists warn that there is no atomic defense. "While time remains" we must outlaw war and the atomic bomb, or there will be no survival.

But there is optimism of a high order in the final chapters of this book. Leland Stowe has a definite solution for the world's plight. The United Nations Organization must be made to work effectively. It must control the atomic bomb, and eventually outlaw it. A new world sovereignty must be set up, based on new world law—and no veto. The World's Best Hope of Jefferson's day "has outgrown the boundaries of our North American continent. It now belongs to the world." Nor can there be a world federation without Russia, though Mr. Stowe warns that we may expect many "Russian headaches and Soviet crises" before we reach the desired goal.

Many will not agree with the author's politics; certainly he is decidedly left of center. We are, however, indebted to him for a wealth of information on a wide variety of subjects, and he writes with rare courage. The rapacity of the Russian soldier of occupation and the "Greek tragedy" of Churchill are flayed with equal vigor, not to mention Mr. Truman's inept handling of the atomic bomb. Incidentally, there is excellent writing in the book, such as the description of Budapest just before her doom: "Budapest was music and laughter and beauty and forgetfulness shaken into a Magyar cocktail of its own. Budapest was a gypsy dance—at a graveyard's fringe. Budapest was a mask of melody and heart's delight; a carnival, it seemed, without a season or a finale."

The author gives to Americans a lofty conception of world citizenship. With almost evangelistic fervor he pleads with us to set our own house in order and lead the world in the making of the right peace.

REBECCA LAMAR HARMON

359 Turrell Ave., South Orange, New Jersey.

**White Man—Yellow Man.** By ARVA C. FLOYD. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1946. pp. 207. \$1.75.

Professor Floyd has written, not a dispassionate history of the relations of white men and yellow men, but a tract for the times. It is history written with emotion, indignation, and an accusing conscience. The brevity of the book makes possible only "a light and running view," with no attempt at an exhaustive study of east-west contacts. The picture is painted with many dark colors, leaving for a final chapter the ray of hope and "challenge."

The theme is clear: the white man's conquest of Asia over four or five centuries, and the yellow man's reaction of the last fifty years. When Pope Alexander VI, in 1493, divided the unknown world between Spain and Portugal, he revealed an attitude of the white man toward other peoples of the world. . . . "Anything in the world was his for the taking. Based upon that assumption he went through all the world . . . to take possession of it. His methods were often vicious and brutal. . . . Racial conceit and a near-worship of force were the twin aspects of the White Man's attitude."

The author lists the steppingstones of the white man's advance in Asia: England to India, Holland to the East Indies, Russia across Siberia, France in Indo-China, America to the Philippines, Germany to the China coast. He does not mince words. "After the first (Opium) war Britain demanded the Island of Hongkong. It was in no way involved in the quarrel, but England took it as sheer loot. . . . The Chinese were made to pay for the illegal opium which they had legally destroyed, and to refund to the White Man the full expense which he had incurred

in thrashing China. . . . The legal arrangement of extraterritoriality was saddled upon the Chinese. . . . By these various schemes, Chinese sovereignty was violated, her integrity as a nation was desecrated. The White Man forced concessions upon her which he himself would never have granted to members of an alien race."

The next section records the yellow man's reaction to western civilization as he met it on the receiving end. Japan, for example, paid the white man the compliment of imitation as she built up an army and a navy, and looked with hungry eyes for colonies. "It was the accepted thing that if a nation would be big and important it must own great properties far away from home."

A more dangerous reaction was the accumulated bitterness of Asia for the white man and his attitude of superiority, the attitude illustrated by the sign at the public garden in Shanghai International Settlement: "Dogs and Chinese Not Allowed." When Japan fought Russia in 1905, it "sent an electric thrill through all of the subjugated peoples of Asia. At last the Yellow Man had challenged the White Man and humbled him in defeat. The cry of victory rolled across Asia summoning all the oppressed to arms. Asia for the Asiatics—out with the Europeans."

Looking to the future, the author observes that Japan's star has set, but that China, the coming giant, will not look happily upon the white man's empires in the Far East. At Cairo it was decided that Japan must be stripped of all properties which she had stolen or seized by violence and greed. Now the yellow man is asking: why should not the white man's empires, stolen by violence and greed, be returned to the people?

The purpose of the book is revealed in the question: What was America fighting for? To retrieve the wrecked empires of Europe? Or now, with "China friendly, even eager; Japan disarmed and receptive," will America practice the democracy which she preaches?

The author gives his major attention to Japan, though his range extends to the brown men of South Asia for illustration. Events move rapidly, and even a tract for the times is soon dated. The discussion of China ends on the hope that Americans and "the Chinese" may join hands, with little reference to the practical problems which divide China into hostile groups today.

The book deals primarily with attitudes: of the western powers, of the orientals; past, present, and future. It attempts to challenge American opinion to a new deal for the yellow man, without going into the difficult and intricate problems which justice and good will must solve. Good will is necessary, very necessary. Tough-minded thinking on ways and means to implement good will is an equal or greater need. It is to be hoped that Professor Floyd will now turn his attention to the next steps.

FLOYD SHACKLOCK

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**How to Read the Bible.** By EDGAR J. GOODSPEED. Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Company, 1946. pp. x+244. \$2.50.

This book is written as a layman's guide for the reading of the Bible. It embodies the main results of literary and historical criticism of the Bible in language which is easily understood, and effectively explains the wealth and variety of re-

ligious experience reflected in the biblical books. Dr. Goodspeed's literary art is everywhere apparent in the arrangement of the biblical materials and in the clarity and amazing conciseness with which he states the ideas of the various writers.

Though he suggests that other procedures in reading the Bible may profitably be followed, the method he adopts is based on a view of the literature according to form. Beginning with the Gospels, which he regards as a logical starting point for a systematic reading, he proceeds to forms of intrinsic interest to the modern mind, such as biography, oration, and sermon, discussed in each case in relation to the age which produced them, and then deals in turn with other literary forms, such as historical narrative, where the ordinary reader may flounder in despair without the aid of a good guidebook. It is Dr. Goodspeed's aim to bring the biblical literature to life and so enrich our spiritual experience by an understanding of our religious heritage. In this he has, on the whole, succeeded brilliantly. There is not a dull page from the beginning to the end.

In a book of so wide a scope it is impossible to do more than select for emphasis a few of the main results of biblical criticism. Few can do this as expertly as Dr. Goodspeed. At the risk of seeming to cavil, however, we may point out that the book would be more useful to the thoughtful reader of the Bible if more attention were given to the prevalent ideas of the Deuteronomists in the writing of the historical books of the Old Testament. The author does fuller justice to the priestly writers, though even here he is silent on the priestly elements which make so great a difference in the understanding of Genesis. As a teacher, this reviewer finds that nothing clears away the mental fog like a discussion of the sources, with their contrasting points of view and their respective ideas of the way the events must have happened. With the forms go the tendencies of religious thought. Both must be regarded as important if we are to succeed in reconstructing ancient life.

Strangely, in view of the importance attached to them by Dr. Goodspeed, the Synoptic Gospels are more inadequately presented than anything else in the book. Even in such a rapid survey of a whole library of Holy Scriptures there should be more space allotted to these. Less than a page is given to Mark, and nothing is stated of the Messianic secret and its unfolding which must strike every reader of that Gospel. It is not sufficient to describe it as an incomparable story, as a strong apologetic interest pervades the whole of it. That calls for a discussion of the religious ideas of the early church which produced the Gospel writers. In the case of Matthew, there is, quite properly, an emphasis on the teaching of Jesus, but the ecclesiasticism and the stern apocalypticism of the Gospel are points to be cleared up, especially the former—as any men's Bible class will remind one when the claims for St. Peter come up for discussion. Luke is considered mainly as the historian among the Gospel writers and, while some attention is given to the social and humanitarian interests of this Gospel, there should be an attempt to bring into a conspectus the picture of Matthew's Jesus, the stern teacher of righteousness, and Luke's Friend of man and Savior of the world. The introduction to John is excellent for the purpose. It is regrettable that the introductions to the Synoptics have not better struck the keynote of what follows. This might have been the case, had Dr. Goodspeed's fine scholarship been used to better purpose at this point.

WILLIAM SCOTT

Randolph-Macon Woman's College, Lynchburg, Virginia.

**The Rediscovery of the Old Testament.** By H. H. ROWLEY. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1946. pp. 314. \$3.00.

**The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament.** By NORMAN H. SNAITH. The Westminster Press, 1946. pp. 251. \$2.75.

**An Outline of Biblical Theology.** By MILLAR BURROWS. The Westminster Press, 1946. pp. xi-380. \$3.50.

Here are three volumes of high merit and real significance, and we are indebted to the publishers for this worthy triad. They are each significant in that they are concerned with religion and its articulation in life. The authors are impressed with the urgency of the times. These are live books dealing with the Book that is alive.

Both Dr. Rowley and Dr. Snaith have had considerable missionary experience, and such experience gives the scholar peculiar skill in the vital interpretation of religion. Dr. Rowley has written quite a few volumes, both technical and general, on particular aspects of the Old Testament, and in this present work he gives us a view of "all the land." The opening chapter deals with "The Abiding Value of the Old Testament," while two full and interesting chapters are devoted to "Archaeology and the Old Testament." "The Meaning of Worship," "The Goal of History," and "The Fulfillment of the Old Testament in the New" are discussed in most competent fashion. The volume is dedicated to H. Wheeler Robinson, choice spirit and great scholar recently deceased, and it would seem as if a rich portion of that great soul had been bequeathed to his disciple.

In the making of this volume there has been quite a displacement of lines on page 205, while on page 236 (second last line) there seems to be an omission. On page 168 *officers* should be *offerers*.

Dr. Snaith's volume—the Hartley-Fernley lecture for 1944—is a positive and constructive book, and it is written in a vigorous style. The book is not a complete manual of Old Testament theology but rather "a series of studies of the Nature of God as he is revealed in the Old Testament" (p. 23). Such an investigation will throw into relief the distinctive ideas of the Old Testament, for all its distinctive ideas are grounded in its unique idea of God. The author makes short work of J. G. Frazer and his ilk, who concentrate on similarity of ideas and fail to observe differences: it is the difference that really matters here. The author is particularly vigorous at this point, but what he says was requiring to be said and he has said it. Dr. Snaith is "a bonnie fechter."

The author discusses the Old Testament terms and ideas: holiness, righteousness, salvation, covenant-love (*Chesed*), election-love (*Ahabah*), and Spirit. These terms are thoroughly discussed and the original meaning made clear. The writer does not seek to found a theology on etymology—a somewhat hazardous enterprise—but pursues the growth and development of ideas through biblical and rabbinical Hebrew. The volume lacks a bibliography and at times it might seem as if the author had not compassed all the available literature.

The last chapter has peculiar value. Here the writer seeks to interpret the New Testament in terms of Old Testament thought, and he is highly successful in the process. The Pauline theology is considerably clarified by this method and the writer claims that by its resolute application Christian theology may again become Bible theology. At present, "neither Catholic nor Protestant theology is

based on biblical theology" (p. 242). All this will stimulate thought, and that is what the book seeks to do.

The volume by Millar Burrows will prove most useful to a wide circle. It is written with particular regard to the needs of ministers and religious educators, but it should appeal to a much wider constituency. The book is not for bedside reading: it requires hard study and it should be read alongside an open Bible.

The Bible remains largely an unread book, and the basic courses in colleges and seminaries only touch the periphery; they do not reach to the core of the matter. They seldom set forth the real relevance and relation of the Word to human life so that it may minister to "the nourishment and guidance of the Christian life" (p. 4). This serious defect the author seeks to remedy: that is the purpose of this volume. His aim is practical and he keeps this aim steadily before him.

This practical aim has produced a topical rather than a chronological order of treatment, and this has distinct advantages. The investigation is by inductive method, and though at first glance it might seem as if we were dealing with the old-fashioned method of proof-texts, that is not so. The author is a sound exegete and allows the Bible to say what it really means: the exegesis is sound and scholarly and his interpretations will meet with general assent. The questions of Authority and Revelation are discussed clearly and succinctly and the author wisely recognizes that there is room for debate on these matters. We might have preferred a fuller discussion here, but the volume is an *outline*.

In addition to the main topics of God, Christ, Man, the Universe, Sin and Salvation, there are illuminating discussions on the Christian Life, Public Worship, Christian Service, and Moral and Social Ideals. There is ample room for further discussion of all those topics, but no subsequent discussion can afford to neglect what Dr. Burrows has written here. The purpose of the author is to send men back to the Bible and to produce a more profound understanding of the Word. It should find a large welcome from all who are concerned with religious teaching and interested in the deepest things of life.

JOHN PATERSON

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**Christian Ethics and Social Policy.** By JOHN C. BENNETT. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946. pp. ix-132. \$2.00.

This small book is not a slight one. It comprises lectures given at the University of Virginia in 1945 and happily retains the lucidity of the spoken word, which together with Dr. Bennett's clarity of observation and analysis, makes it a readable and stimulating primer of social action as seen from the standpoint of "Christian Realism." Its analysis is a marvel of condensation that is yet rich in spiritual awareness, humble amid the complexity of social forces, and withal replete in homiletical suggestion.

We may enter Dr. Bennett's argument where he asserts some points of permanent value accruing to us from the historical social gospel movement in this country, but recognizes immediately that contemporary perplexity about "a straight line from Christian ethics to the concrete problems of society" is the result of the simple yet confusing complex fact that there really are no straight lines. The realistic analysis of the social forces that deflect the line should be of real help to that great host of well-meaning church people whose inability to do anything to bring about a "Chris-

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tion" world freezes their concern in a frustrating helplessness. The author then analyzes—fairly, realistically, and clearly—four typical present-day strategies: (1) that of the Catholic-minded churches; (2) that of bodies such as Quakers and Mennonites who endeavor to realize an ethic of withdrawal; (3) that of those who identify Christianity with some specific such as pacifism—which identifications are "the line of least resistance among all optimistic and idealistic Christians"; and (4) that "morally paralyzing" double standard which assumes "that Christian ethics are so distant from social policy that they are irrelevant to the problems of public life and that there must be two independent moral standards," one for personal relationships and for the church, the other for the world.

Dr. Bennett's own strategy emphasizes "the relevance together with the transcendence of the Christian ethic and takes account of the universality and persistence of sin and the elements of technical autonomy in social policies." This strategy is admittedly difficult to follow, but its essentials plumb the depths of the Christian conscience. It involves awareness of our motives; self-criticism (with a reminder of Lincoln's word that "no man is good enough to govern another without that other's consent"); constant review of our methods ("under the criticism of Christian love"—"what is essential is that we never cease to call any policy by its right name in the light of the Christian standard"); the employment of next steps or "middle axioms," the pursuit of which contemporary goals is "to live for the Kingdom now"; and the practice of corrective and redemptive action in some sphere open to us as a counteraction to our official or class or group influence.

But this is not all. Dr. Bennett calls us to a fresh evaluation of the ethical role of the church—that organization which only recently could be deprecated by a ministerial reformer as "a very poor agency to work through" but which is today needed "as a base for operations in a world that is still alien . . . as a source of guidance and power and healing . . . as a bond of union . . . as a community . . . as an ethical laboratory . . ." The influence of the church is at least threefold: its indirect effect upon cultural unity and its contributions to human freedom, its direct social teaching which aids its members to live according to Christian ethics, and its stress upon direct action when circumstances call for it. These influences should be seen as a whole; but the point at which concentration is needed now is "direct teaching on the meaning of Christian faith and ethics for social policy within the church so that its members in their vocations as citizens may be changed, actually converted, in conviction and purpose." For, in the familiar words of Augustine, the Christian is a citizen of two communities, the City of God and the City of the World, which two "lie confusedly together." Disciplined by Christian faith in the church, the Christian citizen "will use his best judgment to discover what the next steps should be in the nation or in the world."

The book concludes with a note on "Christian Ethics and the Ethics of Natural Law." "There is a moral law that is known in part outside the orbit of Christian faith . . . those who call themselves Christians will often need to learn about the moral conditions for the good life and the good society" from non-Christians. "Within the full context of Christian faith the moral law comes into its own, and there are resources in Christianity which should prevent application of it in one-sided and distorted ways. Without the sensitivity and the power that are the fruit of faith and love, men fall far short even of the more general moral law."

I would like to make this little book required reading for many more than the few theological students I teach. If it were possible for the Protestant clergy to obtain an insight comparable in clarity to that herein set forth, our churches might well recover their moral authority. The reading of this vivid analysis prompts me to say that one of the ways in which that might be accomplished could be the placing of ethics on a par with theology in Protestant theological education—as I understand is done in Roman Catholic seminaries. (This present contrast perhaps partly explains why the Catholic priest usually knows what to do in a critical situation, while the Protestant minister frequently vacillates or flees.) In any case, for all thoughtful readers Dr. Bennett's important little book is a great help in finding our way through the confused borderlands in which Christian social action takes place today.

C. HOWARD HOPKINS

Bangor Theological Seminary, Bangor, Maine.

**Pioneers for Peace Through Religion.** By CHARLES S. MACFARLAND. New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1946. pp. 256. \$2.50.

This is a remarkable book for many reasons. It has to do with an endowment founded by Andrew Carnegie, a remarkable man, for the aid of peace movements to be carried on by the church. It is written by Charles S. Macfarland, a remarkable man, who knows by successful experience more about church co-operation than does any other man of our day. It deals with plans conceived and carried through by Henry A. Atkinson, a remarkable organizing and directing secretary.

The book itself impresses the reader both by the quantity and the quality of the achievements described. There has been no considerable peace enterprise of the last thirty years which is not taken account of by Dr. Macfarland. In times like our own, when the memories of two world wars are horribly vivid to us, and when rumors of wars are always with us, it is some comfort to realize that there are forces of no small power running in the opposite direction, running persistently and unceasingly. Of course, it is hardly to be expected that the income from an endowment, not a third of that of many a first-class small college in our land, can by any sudden stroke decisively educate the minds of fifty million church members, to say nothing of quickly illuminating the whole public opinion of a nation like ours. The Church Peace Union does not expect to win by spectacular means. Probably the yearly income of the Union is not large enough to keep the United States battle fleets supplied with flags.

None the less, in the long run, the force that can run longest counts for most. There is nothing sensational in this book, no military parades, but an impressive procession of facts which have been moving along for more than a quarter of a century. We are always being told that if any organization is to war against war at all seriously, it must have the sympathy and co-operation of the leaders of public opinion. I doubt whether any other organization like the Church Peace Union has, in our time, had the support, in one degree or another, which the Union has received. I have counted in the book before us one hundred and fourteen names of American and European leaders, the majority of them of world-wide reputation, who have at one time or another been in friendly and helpful touch with the Union.

Again, one hears that the task of any peace-seeking organization is to do its part toward creating the "international mind," which is just what the Carnegie organization has been doing for a generation. Witness the close affiliation of this organization and the World Alliance for International Friendship Through the

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Churches, which has, year after year, arranged for and carried through exchanges of English and American preachers. Further, we are always being reminded that a body like this must be firmly nonsectarian. Well, this body is composed of Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Jews, and one of its most noteworthy pronouncements in the second World War was prepared under the joint sanction of Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Jewish leaders. We are warned also never to forget that any group, aiming at a world-wide transformation of public opinion, must be ready to help other worthy organizations working for the same result. I do not know any other group which has been more generous in such helpfulness, though this is often a most delicate problem. Any philanthropic organization is entitled to estimate its own task as the most important, but that does not establish too sweeping a claim to funds already allocated elsewhere. According to Dr. Macfarland there were, in 1900, four hundred and twenty-five peace bodies in the world, and during the years since its beginning the Union has kept its distinctiveness and the effectiveness hoped for by its founders and, at the same time, has kept out of competition and unnecessary duplication with other bodies.

To mention but a few phases of the work, the Union, in World War I, helped the churches to rally to the subject of the "Fourteen Points" and the League of Nations. In the lull between the first and second World War, Dr. Atkinson did his utmost to rouse the churches from a lethargy, not to say stupor, because of what seemed at the time like moral exhaustion and, in spite of this discouraging plight, kept the moral obligations increasingly before the religious world. He was realistic enough to see that World War I did not lead to a brave new world; that the postwar world was not especially brave, that it was not new, but just about the same old mess; that America was not thinking of a world at all, but of America only. In those dreadful days the Church Peace Union, together with the Federal Council and the World Alliance, worked with renewed effort to keep the peace ideals on high. Inasmuch as the second World War finally came, it might have seemed that the peace effort was labor thrown away; but it becomes clearer each day that this message and these methods are the only ones that will ever end war. For under all the preparations of war-makers is the assumption that the people will remain passive and quiescent till events have gone too far to stop the evil. Crusades for peace, insistence upon the rights of minorities, the creation of mutual respect among nations, the untiring proclamation of the flat contradiction, on the one hand, between the doctrines of any religion worth having, and militarism on the other, all these and more the Church Peace Union is proclaiming with unabated energy. It is utterances like these that the militarists fear. Admittedly the militarists want peace, but they want it through the military annihilation of the opponents. The Union does not spend its time debating the question as to whether war is ever justifiable or not, but stands for the belief that there is a better way. In an office that has information concerning just about all the peace plans now in existence, its experts weigh the merits of all suggestions and yet do not surrender its position the peace plans must meet the demand that all programs be squared with the doctrines of Christianity and of the Judaism out of which Christianity came. Dr. Macfarland's book is a fine achievement in presenting the peace problem with deep loyalty to moral principles and with complete regard for practical scientific method.

FRANCIS J. MCCONNELL

Bishop Emeritus, The Methodist Church, New York Area.

**Understanding the Christian Faith.** By GEORGIA HARKNESS. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1947. pp. 187. \$1.75.

"I can't believe that!" said the incredulous Alice in Wonderland. "Well," said the Queen, "just close your eyes, take a deep breath, and try again."

There is nothing of that attitude in *Understanding the Christian Faith*. Here is a book in which the eyes of the understanding are wide open. It is not claimed that they see all; at best, they peer into reality as through a glass, darkly. But they see enough which is steadfast and sure to warrant the great surmise of faith.

This scintillating volume is primarily a layman's look into the queen of the sciences, written out of the mature thinking and living of a queenly interpreter, who walks that realm in white. Here is a book written with the test-tube approach of our scientific day, yet in the mood that "Science walks with humble feet to find the God that faith has found." Here is taken for granted, as a religious axiom, the guiding principle of the Master Teacher, "He that doeth the will shall know."

The book is not a vase for the display of cut flowers, even of the most fragrant virtues and graces. These pages have not so much to do with fruits as with roots. And when you talk about roots you land in theology, even as General MacArthur did in his solemn broadcast to the world from Tokyo Bay, as he declared, "The problem basically is theological." So spoke a layman. And as Dr. Harkness reminds us, "Laymen make the greater part of the political, economic, and social decisions upon which human destinies depend. There are enough Christian laymen in the world to establish 'peace on earth, good will among men,' if laymen understood the Christian gospel and acted upon it."

*Understanding the Christian Faith* suggests not boring hours in a stuffy lecture room but, rather, a rapturous visit to the cathedral of our faith. Treading reverently down the center aisle of the vast and vaulted nave one comes in a fresh approach to glimpse what faith is and what it is not. With this sure guide by our side such old-fashioned words as "judgment," "redemption," "incarnation," "atonement," "forgiveness," and "grace," recovered and reinterpreted, flash out with a new incandescence.

At the high altar, in the spirit of adoration, one faces the ultimate fact of the Divine Love that will not let us go and, also, the problem of evil's shadow on all things fair. Upon the altar there gleams a cross, where the mystic meaning of Calvary is caught in words of devotion, rather than of debate. High above shines the jeweled passion window of Jesus the Revealer and Christ the Redeemer in all the wonder of the Triune Name.

As one comes to the lectern, where the Book of Ages lies open, both the heavenly treasure and the earthly vessel merge into a new understanding of the Bible, as God speaks through its pages to give "assurance, power, and direction for living."

A prophetic voice sounds forth from the high pulpit, proclaiming the evangel. It is the old message of salvation, in which the heinousness of sin is not covered with euphonic verbiage. It is a message that comes to our day of the atomic bomb with a meaning as new and as wide as the sweep of human desires. Justification and redemption are not outdated by any newly minted, current psychological coins.

Fronting all the implications of the holiness of God and of the inherent dignity of sinning man, there steals into the listening heart a new understanding that real

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prayer is never magic, but the Christian's vital breath. It throws to us the very keys of the Kingdom.

On either side of the altar blaze the dual transept windows of the Church and the Kingdom. As we turn to go, the eastern window flames with all the resurrection glory of a stingless death and a spoiled and beaten grave, as it speaks of eternal life begun below and of a quality of life that shall endless be.

Leaving the radiant temple with a new understanding of the Christian faith, hearts are strangely warmed with a triumphant certainty that "what makes religion religion is willingness to worship, to bow in humility before an utterly holy deity, and to subordinate self to the service of that deity."

FREDERICK BROWN HARRIS

Foundry Methodist Church, Washington, D. C.

**Anglo-Saxon Saints and Scholars.** By ELEANOR SHIPLEY DUCKETT. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947. pp. x-487. \$5.00.

This noble book, studies of four outstanding "Saints and Scholars" in England of the seventh and eighth centuries, supplements the author's earlier volume, *The Gateway to the Middle Ages*, which, dealing with the sixth century in Europe, has taken its place among standard historical works. Again we find painstaking scholarship combined with charm of style and with sensitiveness to all most significant in that religious experience which is assuredly the most significant factor in history. Miss Duckett does not deliberately point out the relevance of the past to our own day, but no reader is likely to miss it, especially if he turns to the book from skimming the morning paper or a religious magazine. Parallels and contrasts both leap into the mind; nor is there a more interesting episode in Christian story than the slow conquest of Britain by the Christian faith.

Christianity in the seventh century was not young; it was as far from its origins as we are from the thirteenth century. But we realize, as we read, that we watch in Britain the impact of the Christian faith on primitive culture. It was a sophisticated world through which St. Paul had first spread the good news of the gospel: here, on the other hand, we watch that news preached against the background of courageous gloom reflected in Anglo-Saxon poetry such as *Beowulf*; and we see with delight Religion bringing Civilization in its train. For here comes Learning, quaintly obsolete, if you will, but a controlling passion; here is Art, expressed in poetry or architecture, and in the harmonious organization of community living; the supreme Art of Fellowship, victorious if chequered and broken, triumphant over discord and distrust. Illustrated and promoted by the lives of these saints and scholars are all the gifts of civilized peace.

Tensions were as sharp in the seventh century as now, even if issues differ. In these pages we see ancient Celtic tradition obstinately holding its own, but gradually superseded by that relentless Latin impulse to administration and law, essential if England were to be brought into the harmony of the Universal Church. Ecumenical unity? Naughty suspicion may dawn that a thousand years from now, some differences now sharply dividing us may seem no more vital than differences about the shape of the tonsure or the proper date for Easter. Yet let us be bold to say that below all anguished divisions, in these Dark Ages, as in our own day, we discern a supernatural unity. Every great figure presented in this book has been shaped by both Celtic and Latin tradition.

The four characters are vividly presented and delightfully varied. First comes Aldhelm; he must have been the hardest to treat sympathetically, for his quaint "Hisperic" attempts to continue classical literary art through "riddles," and "tapestries of words . . . interlocked in intricate construction, adorned with figures of speech innumerable," show the Dark Ages at their darkest from an intellectual point of view. Yet we see how his Celtic inheritance reinforced by faithful adherence to Latin use made him a valuable leader for his generation. Wilfrid, the next figure, is defiantly Roman, in spite of his youthful background at Lindisfarne, and his militant career illustrates painful phases in the current dissensions; yet we welcome his Latin administrative competence as well as the practical Latin instinct to utilize spiritual force in building fine churches. Bede, who follows, is the most lovable figure presented; in him the perfect type of English Christianity finds satisfactory expression; the careful review of his scholarly output, surprising in scope and quality, reveals monastic communal life as shaped by Roman use at its peaceful best. Finally, in Boniface, the great missionary bishop, we are transported into that international order developed by Roman genius as it never could have been by Saxon or Celt. In his career, as in that of every figure studied, even in Wilfrid, is manifest such transformation of militant impulse into sacrificial passion as illumines the Anglo-Saxon poem, "The Dream of the Rood." Never was the paradoxical dynamic of the cross revealed with more potency than in the records of the Dark Ages. So, quietly, without parade, Miss Duckett's book bears witness that the confluence of conflicting forces is part of the process of transformation of the natural order, perpetual within Christianity so long as time shall last.

The brief epilogue brings out admirably the distinctive Anglo-Saxon quality in all these characters: the "feeling for their own people," the love of kin, the "sympathy with the spirit of mystery that brooded over Nature," the relentless purpose, the delight in craftsmanship. It is interesting to find attention drawn to the attitude toward women in seventh-century England; as we read of the great religious communities including both men and women, not seldom with a woman as administrative head, we may wonder mischievously how soon a woman may be president of Harvard. But this is a frivolous conclusion to a review.

One does not want to criticize anything in a book for which so much gratitude is due. But the uncultured layman, less cognizant than he should be of the geography of ancient Britain, does ruefully wish that he might have been favored by one or two maps.

VIDA D. SCUDDER

45 Leighton Road, Wellesley, Massachusetts.

**Christian Perfection.** By FRANÇOIS DE SALIGNAC DE LA MOTHE FÉNELON. Edited and prefaced by Charles F. Whiston. Translated by Mildred Whitney Stillman. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947. pp. xiii-208. \$1.75.

Every year the Presiding Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church recommends for Lenten reading what has come to be known as "the Presiding Bishop's book for Lent." This year the selection of Bishop Tucker was this new edition of Archbishop Fénelon's devotional writings. It gets its name from the fact that it contains nearly all of Fénelon's *Instructions et Avis sur Divers Points de la Morale et de la Perfection Chrétienne*.

Originally composed, for the most part, as letters to individuals seeking help, and as addresses to conferences of earnest Christians, the spiritual wisdom here pre-

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sented is simple, sensible, and relevant to the eternal needs of the human spirit. Though written in the age of Louis XIV, what it says of self-love, self-renunciation, crosses, the knowledge of God, spiritual dryness, inner peace, the right use of time, and kindred subjects, is undated. It has something of the flavor of *The Imitation of Christ*, but with fewer aphorisms and more consecutive treatment of the subjects under consideration, and with more regard to the claims of life within society. Of social gospel in the modern sense there is none. The chapter on recreation is less activist than the term might lead one to expect. Yet throughout the book, and particularly in the concluding chapters on simplicity and humility, one senses the fact that its author has learned how to live well, not only with God, but with men. There is a very discerning chapter entitled "Helps in Sadness," and throughout the book are many hints toward good psychotherapy as well as good religion.

The translation is well done, though, in some instances, too close transliteration blurs the author's meaning. For example, the chapter heading "Violence to Oneself" turns out to deal, not with self-destruction, but with strength of will power. Both the editor and the translator have rendered good service in making available these meditations which can profitably be read, not hastily but in small amounts, the year around.

GEORGIA HARKNESS

Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Illinois.

**Finding God Through Christ.** By CHARLES EDWARD FORLINES. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1947. pp. 207. \$2.00.

Spiritual pride would tarnish the halo of any saint who would write his autobiography to reveal his saintliness. But there is an editorial technique whereby the post-mortem collation of the sermons and lectures of a man may, in effect, become the autobiography of a saint. That is the accomplishment of this book.

The late Charles Edward Forlines, professor of systematic theology, and president of Westminster Theological Seminary, has been described by Bishop J. H. Straughn as "the greatest mind that Protestant Methodism contributed to the United Church." That greatness involved not only learning of highly individualistic acquisition, but a quality of soul fed by the Eternal Springs. The story of his heroically dramatic life is told in the biographical appreciation by President Fred G. Holloway.

These sermons and lectures constitute the great bulk of the writings of Dr. Forlines, collected at the insistence of his students, and completed after his death by the editor, Dr. Richard L. Shipley. The work is all the more marvelous when it is realized that a muscle injury in early manhood made writing, even on the classroom blackboard, a laborious task. But the worth of the work is not in sentiment, rather in the realization that when this teacher wrote he made his writing count. He had a talent for simplifying great truths without that oversimplification which dulls. His preaching is doctrinal, with an appreciation of the Christian revelation that prevents pedantry.

The cursory reader will want to linger long over some passages, like the description of grace as "beauty of action," and the sermon on "The Sovereignty of God" as a reverent proclamation of divine purpose and human freedom.

The writings have been arranged in the order of the logical concern of a teacher of theologues. "The message of the gospel" is the general category of the first section, and "the messenger of the gospel" completes the work.

The bulk of the material comes from matriculation and baccalaureate sermons delivered from manuscript. The nature of these occasions weighed heavily upon the preacher, and into the content of the messages went the cream of his theology, the longing to enrich the ministry of the men committed to his care, and to glorify God through Christ.

WALLACE J. CUMMINGS

Asbury Methodist Church, Duncannon, Pennsylvania.

**On Being Fit to Live With.** By HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946. pp. ix-219. \$2.00.

"Minister Emeritus of all America"—that is a fitting title for Dr. Fosdick. His latest book of sermons, *On Being Fit to Live With*, is but further demonstration of his ability to speak to all the people.

"Consider, in the first place," that there is ever a vital Christian message cogently presented in these sermons. Preached directly to the postwar world, they are a clear reaffirmation of faith in Christianity—"the most challenging, stimulating, sustaining faith that mankind knows." After more than forty years of preaching, Dr. Fosdick here presents ample testimony of a vibrant faith in Christ. For instance, in answering the question, "What does it really mean to be great?" with the text, "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant," he declares of Christ, "I have been preaching Christ for many years, but in these days he gains new meaning. He is so right, so unexpectedly, incredibly right! Even when his insight most shocks our realistic common sense, he turns out to be right."

Consider, further, the fact that these sermons are ever so personal. They search the soul and call for decisions. "Are we part of the problem or of the answer?" This demands soul-deep thinking! To me it is what Dr. Fosdick calls "forked lightning"—it strikes home. There are not only personal questions but helpful answers—"Unfailing Resources." Many lives are opened to illustrate the power that comes to those who seek and find God.

Follow our truth further now and see that this tree of faith is rooted in the Bible. "Catching the Wrong Bus" finds a starting point in the Parable of the Prodigal. "The Constructive Use of Fear" stems from Paul's "You ought not to feel proud; you ought to be afraid." "A Man Is What He Proves to Be in an Emergency" grows from a very able study of the passage "Lead us not into temptation." Bible biographies are tellingly used. Great personalities, in and out of the Bible, are brought to witness to the power of the Christian message.

What, then, is the conclusion of the matter? You ought to read these sermons! *On Being Fit to Live With* will help you to live with and believe more firmly in Christ. These sermons will help all people, ministers or laymen, to "choose Christ's side," for "He is the answer! That is the everlasting truth!"

WILFRED HANSEN

The Islip Methodist Church, Islip, New York.

**Heralds of God.** By JAMES S. STEWART. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946. pp. 222. \$2.50.

Someone has said that an essay takes its reader by the hand and leads him round and round a subject, while a sermon takes by the hand a listener and leads him to the next city. Here are five papers on preaching—The Preacher's World, The

Preacher's Theme, The Preacher's Study, The Preacher's Technique, The Preacher's Inner Life; and they "arrive"! They march and convince and captivate.

Dr. Stewart, having made, to my knowledge, but one visit to this country, and that a number of years ago, is not so well known west of the Atlantic as he should be. He is one of the truly great expository preachers of our time. Personally, I can hardly help deploring the loss to the pulpit in his resignation from the North Morningside Church in Edinburgh to accept the chair of New Testament language, literature, and theology at New College.

In these lectures, delivered on the Warrack Foundation in the University of Edinburgh and St. Andrews, he not only lays bare, in genuine measure, the secrets of his own ministry, but abundantly demonstrates that ministry himself. He knows what kind of world it is in which we live, torn between "disillusionment and hope," "escapism and realism," "skepticism and faith," and he knows what kind of gospel it is we have to preach if we desire, with warmth and passion, to proclaim the Word and Deed of God both as victory and as challenge, to a generation strangely wrought upon by unsolved and therefore stultifying tensions. His plea for honest and unlimited toil, "sheer hard work, sweat of brain and discipline of soul," in all who would undertake such a prophetic vocation; his page upon page of practical suggestions as to matter and form, procedure, language, all of it profusely illustrated out of a rich knowledge of Scripture, always at ready command, of poetry and biography; with the sharing throughout of that "utmost serenity" "known to the mountain tops" where once "a life of terrible self-giving" "outwatched the stars": all of it lays hold with authoritative grip on heart and mind and will, to concentrate whether for preacher or layman a truly moving experience. *Pectus facit theologum, praedicatorem, Christianum!*

Particularly valuable for us are not only his obvious sincerity and desperate earnestness, vis-a-vis a "secondhand religion, and borrowed theology, and stolid unkindled churches," coupled with his insistence on biblical and doctrinal preaching, but also, and scarcely less, the consequent synthesis which he achieves between "the activism of thoroughgoing thisworldliness and the quietism of a thoroughgoing otherworldliness," his sane and persistent theological balance, yielding neither to the utopian, naturalistic extremes of liberalism nor to the defeatist tendencies implicit within neo-orthodoxy.

"Tomorrow," Bishop Gore used to say (p. 99), as he gave his final charge to candidates on the eve of their ordination, "Tomorrow I shall say to you, wilt thou, wilt thou, wilt thou? But there will come a day when Another will say, hast thou, hast thou, hast thou?"

In this little book James Stewart *has!*

PAUL SCHERER

Union Theological Seminary, New York City.

**Creation Continues.** By FRITZ KUNKEL. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1947. pp. xiv-317. \$3.00.

Fritz Kunkel's purpose in writing this book is "to investigate, clarify, and increase the influence of Matthew's Gospel on the modern reader." Why, we might ask, does he choose Matthew to influence the modern reader rather than Mark or Luke or John? One might ask, does the modern reader have some special need which Matthew can supply? Modern man does have a special need, Fritz Kunkel tells us. It is the need for developing a new psychic structure that will be worthy

of the spiritual demands of the times. And Matthew has recorded in the First Gospel the inner development of the early Christians as they responded to the life and teachings of Jesus.

Man finds himself today in an era of individualism. He has outgrown his feudalistic and patriarchal robes and the outer authority that once ruled him. His ancient armor is not sufficient, for it is his inner life which needs a new garment. This is a new step in his psychological development, but in many cases the individualistic tendencies have not led to spiritual evolution. On the contrary, as Fritz Kunkel points out, individualistic possibilities have become egocentric creations. A new kind of armor has been put on, this time to keep the inner life seemingly safe, but actually cut off, static and repressed. The only hope for modern man to become individuated and integrated, as God showed us through his new creation, Christ, is for man to co-operate in creation. He must take a new responsibility for his own development, his spiritual evolution. He must ask, seek, and knock. There is a way to prevent the destructiveness of individualism and to evolve a new consciousness that will meet the outer needs and the inner needs of man today. It is, says Fritz Kunkel, through Christianity, that man must find his way today. It is because of the author's deep concern that man go beyond egocentric individualism that he points the way to growth and to integration which the disciples achieved. In *Creation Continues*, the spiritual goal as well as the means to achieve it is discussed. The best means to bring about a new consciousness is to experiment with the principles Jesus sets before us. If we would know about the effect of fasting and giving alms on our evolving characters, we should practice them and find out. This evolution of character is, says Fritz Kunkel, "a painful and exclusively personal task. The longer we postpone our individual crisis and escape the throes of our individual evolution, the more debts we accumulate for ourselves as well as for the race."

Matthew, in his records of the early Christians, and Fritz Kunkel from his experience in the present, tell us that not only is the journey difficult, but the Kingdom must be reached here on earth. So difficult is this journey, says the author, "that none of us could achieve it, if Jesus had not opened the way and had not Matthew preserved the chart."

There is a psychological kinship between Matthew and the author. Both speak with the authority that comes from first-hand experience with the truths with which they are dealing. These "psychological twins" show us the results of their own inner development, Matthew with the power of an artist-writer to speak to men of all times, Fritz Kunkel with his psychological insight speaking to the particular need of our own time through the person of Matthew and through his own contribution—the "We Psychology" which he describes in his book and in two of his earlier books, *How Character Develops* and *In Search of Maturity*.

This book will not appeal to those modern psychologists whose ideas are based on materialist philosophy, nor will it be acceptable to religious groups or individuals who cling to the authoritarianism of feudalistic and patriarchal religion; but it should appeal to all those who are dissatisfied with static religion in our time and with the ineffectiveness of their own lives. These last, who are willing to experiment and explore for the sake of their own inner development, will find guidance in *Creation Continues*.

DOROTHY M. DAVISON

Downington Friends School, Downington, Pennsylvania.

**Problems in Religion and Life.** By ANTON T. BOISEN. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1946. pp. 159. \$1.50.

Many pastors are disturbed, even terrified, by the increasing number of social and emotional problems which they are asked to interpret. Moreover, many ministers feel inadequate to meet these situations, both because of lack of training and because of the baffling complexity of the problems. *Problems in Religion and Life* is planned to help the struggling minister in sharpening his understanding and in providing standards and criteria which may guide him in his efforts. As the subtitle indicates, it is a manual for pastors, a tool to aid them in assessing social and personal situations.

The first section deals with the community, the home, and the individual. The second part lists types of maladjustment. The third section has to do with general problems. Each chapter contains a general statement followed by a series of questions to aid in evaluating a given situation and concluding with a bibliography. The chapter on "The Mentally Ill," which relates to an increasing responsibility of the alert pastor, illustrates the helpfulness of the book. The unfoldment of a case of mental illness may be as follows: (1) History of the present illness, (2) The present picture, (3) Analysis and interpretation, (4) Subsequent history. Under each heading a number of pertinent questions are asked.

In securing the book, the purchaser should be aware of its nature. It is not a series of factual statements about the troubled areas of social and individual life. Rather it is a compass to guide the pastor in developing a technique to meet the problems which he cannot well evade. Nor should the pastor seek immediately to apply or to use all the approaches suggested in this book. If he is interested in evaluating the community in which he works, its limitations and its potentialities, let him turn to that section. If he is dealing with the emotional problems of people in his parish, let him use the suggestions in the chapters on the mentally ill, the delinquent, the sexually maladjusted, the alcoholic, or the physically ill.

One of the most stimulating chapters is about the minister's library. A warning is given not to stock one's library with second-rate books interpreting the great masters in a given field. Rather, suggests the author, possess and assimilate the writings of the masters themselves. The book concludes with a significant bibliography in the fields of sociology and psychology.

LLOYD E. FOSTER

Old First Church, Newark, New Jersey.

**The Modern Parent and the Teaching Church.** By WESNER FALLAW. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1946. pp. 225. \$2.50.

This is a valuable, thought-provoking book which should be read widely by pastors and workers in the field of religious education, and also by parents who are concerned about the religious development of their children. Professor Fallaw writes out of a rich experience, much of the philosophy and practice here set forth having been wrought out in six years of service as director of religious education at Winnetka Congregational Church, near Chicago.

The book deals with the basic problem of religious education, that of enlisting the home in the task of teaching religion. The author approaches the problem from the points of view of liberal Protestantism and of progressive education, but he safeguards himself against certain dangers to which an extreme commitment to these

points of view might expose him. That is to say, the development is balanced, and the book should prove useful to a wide circle of readers of diverse outlook.

The thesis of the book is "that the family unit, not merely the individual child, must be incorporated in any satisfactory program of religious education." The church has been giving lip service to the importance of the family in religious development, and religious educators have declared repeatedly that the educational task of the church can never be successful without the active co-operation of the home. However, little has been done to implement this conviction. The author insists that something must be done, and suggests ways in which church and home may unite in an integrated program of religious education. "Parents are the real teachers of religion, or irreligion," he affirms, and no matter how effective the church's program and leadership, it "is inadequate for its task unless parents reinforce its objectives—both in attitude and practice."

The difficulties inherent in this "mutuality of relationship between church and home" are not minimized, but these constitute a challenge to those who are concerned with the teaching of religion. Certainly it is foolish to declare that without this mutuality of relationship failure must ensue, and at the same time fail to exert every effort to overcome the obstacle to such relationship.

The book has numerous practical suggestions, and examples are cited frequently to point the suggestions. Especially helpful are discussions concerning the enrolling of the family unit, instead of the individual child; the methods for informing and enlisting the parents and teachers; the operation of community councils; aiding young adults in the establishing of Christian homes; guiding adolescents, et cetera.

It is just a century since the publication of Bushnell's *Discourses on Christian Nurture*, in which he advances the consideration of the organic unity of the family, and pleads for family nurture in religion. Professor Fallaw stresses this basic factor in any adequate program of religious nurture, and gives help to those who seek to know *how* such a program may be effected.

SANDFORD FLEMING

Berkeley Baptist Divinity School, Berkeley, California.

#### A Functional Approach to Religious Education. By ERNEST J. CHAVE.

Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1947. pp. v-168. \$2.50.

Dr. Chave here presents his theory and practice of religious education. It veers decidedly from the traditional approach generally made by religious educators in the Christian church. In fact, at times it departs so far from the theory commonly recognized by Christian educators that one may note without injustice to the author that there is a distinction between Christian education and religious education. The latter, used as a generic term in this book, associates religious education with all activities that aim to give "specific, concrete meaning in ordinary everyday adjustments of human living." And "from a functional point of view one may be religious without assuming a theistic view." "We live," the author notes, "in a world not of one Book, but of many significant books; not of one religious culture, but of plural concepts and practices; not of one God, but of many gods."

The objective of the book is clearly stated in the last paragraph of the closing chapter. It is "to encourage a functional approach to religious education; to indicate how it may be done at all age levels; to suggest how it makes available a rich and stimulating body of source materials which make religion vital for current living; to make clear that the controversial questions which divide religious people may be

frankly and effectively dealt with when indoctrination gives place to creative educational procedures."

The value of the study is in its analysis of the processes of religious education and growth. Religion is defined as "another complex body of experiences on which it is desirable to get analytic data, especially as one is concerned with developing an educational program to further its best functioning in individuals and in society under widely varying conditions."

Ten types of religious experience that identify common elements found in all persons in varied life situations are defined and carefully analyzed. The ten categories used to describe religion as it operates in growing lives are: (1) sense of worth, (2) social sensitivity, (3) appreciation of the universe, (4) discrimination in values, (5) responsibility and accountability, (6) co-operative fellowship, (7) quest for truth and realization of values, (8) integration of experiences into a working philosophy of life, (9) appreciation of historical continuity, (10) participation in group celebrations.

The five chapters that show the place of the ten classifications form the heart of the book, and the factorial analysis made in them of religious experience has inestimable value to the religious educator. But it is doubtful if the values associated with the critical review of religious education will be cordially received. The naturalistic approach used by the author will tend to insulate the contributions of the study from the great body of Christian educators.

The interpretations made of the analytical process in order to give more enlightened "resynthesized meanings" to religious experience sometimes seem to reflect not merely an impatience with the Christian church but a skepticism about its effectiveness. It is noted that in the struggle for human rights "the churches have done a great deal but other agencies have done more." This position ignores the place of the church as a religious dynamo that generates a religious spirit and channels it to organizations and persons. In fact, the church has been the most dynamic influence in helping the individual to "meet spiritual obligations as a parent, a taxpayer, an honest businessman, a member of a humanitarian organization, or as a good neighbor."

The common ground between the author and those who are willing to be called by what seems to some the vague term "theistic" is "A spiritual atmosphere is necessary for the finest development of spiritual qualities." *A Functional Approach to Religious Education* is a significant and valuable contribution to the literature on religious education.

JOHN O. GROSS

Board of Education, The Methodist Church, Nashville, Tennessee.

**The Living Liturgy.** By MASSEY H. SHEPHERD, JR. New York: Oxford University Press, 1946. pp. x-139. \$2.25.

Surely one of the highly significant movements of the present hour in Christendom is the liturgical revival which has arisen, first in the Roman Catholic Church, then in the Anglican Communion and, in more recent years, within the Protestant denominations in America. An admirable study of this revival appeared some years ago in *RELIGION IN LIFE* from the pen of C. Kilmer Myers, now a member of the faculty of the General Theological Seminary in New York. In this book by Dr. Shepherd, an Episcopalian, we have a collection of popular essays, originally

published in *The Witness*, all of them concerned with the principles and implications of the revival.

The book opens with a clear statement of the fundamental ideas and ideals of the liturgical movement. Its intention is to stress the reality of the Body of Christ which is the Church; its means to this end is to emphasize worship, and particularly the Lord's Supper, as the actual realization of this truth of membership in the Body. With this as the central point, the movement seeks to relate all aspects of the common life to the reality of the Church as the divine society, placed in the world to leaven the lump.

While any Episcopalian will find several suggestions made by the author open to some question or at least debatable—for there are differences of opinion within the Episcopal Church on such matters as "intinction," for example—the book may be commended to all who wish a fresh and stimulating approach to the problem of worship.

W. NORMAN PITTENGER

General Theological Seminary, New York City.

**La Sainte Communion.** Marbeck's Communion Service adapted to a French text, by RENÉ VAILLANT. Published by the Author.

The Rev. Dr. René Vaillant has rendered a signal service to the great cause of congregational singing at divine worship throughout the world at large, by publishing Marbeck's Holy Communion Service with the French text, in which he has cleverly adapted the genius of our English language to that of his national tongue. Congregations cannot worship God by proxy while Marbeck's monosyllabus melodies are all written well within the octave and often down to a hexachord and pentachord. To those who care for these things, there is an exhaustive article in the spring number of *Cowley*, which is a quarterly review of the American Congregation of the Society of St. John the Evangelist (an Episcopal order). But if the reader desires more, he is referred to *Church Music in History and Practice*, by Winfred Douglas, which has become a textbook in most universities.

It is well known that the text of the Holy Communion Service is in prose and not in poetry, so that this is where free rhythm comes into its own. Free rhythm does not mean "free from rhythm!" It means that binaries and ternaries are artistically blended with a delightful regular irregularity, or irregular regularity! It is only natural that Dr. Vaillant should make great use of the colossal researches of the French monks of Solesmes during the past sixty years and more, which are now accepted as authentic throughout the Christian world; the Roman renaissance of Gregorian Chant under Pius X in 1903 was solidly founded upon such reliable information. Congregational singing was then ordered but, with few exceptions, the forbidden fruits of music are employed rather than the Gregorian Chant. It may be of interest to note that Gregorian music is the official music of the Lutheran, the Anglican, and the Roman Churches, while Marbeck's beautiful melodies are now being adapted to the Latin text—a happy sign in this age of interdenominationalism. It would seem that it is the utter simplicities of Gregorian music that constitute its chief difficulties. Marbeck died in 1585; Grove gives his biography in his *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*.

BECKET GIBBS

501 West 121st St., New York City.

**Methodist Union in the Courts.** By JUDGE WALTER McELREATH. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1946. pp. 318. \$3.00.

*Methodist Union in the Courts* is the story of the long train of legal controversies and trials which accompanied the unification of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church into THE METHODIST CHURCH. It is not only interesting in its legal aspects, but it sets forth a considerable portion of Methodist history authenticated by sworn testimony of reliable witnesses and judicial decisions. The detailed testimony of Bishop John M. Moore, Bishop Paul Garber, and Bishop Collins Denny may be read with much profit by all who desire to have a more perfect understanding of the constitution of The Methodist Church. The road to church union is not easy. The preservation of property rights and endowment funds, which easily may be lost through careless procedure, is an important element in a consolidation. The epoch-making decisions of the Supreme Court of South Carolina and the Federal Courts, set forth in detail, illustrate how thoroughly these rights were safeguarded. Even the names of the uniting churches were saved for The Methodist Church. Dissident members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, were enjoined from appropriating its name and from using any name similar to it.

This book, because of the accurate accumulation and interesting portrayal of information relating to a successful church union, will be useful to all interested in the bringing together of the many Protestant denominations. One of the interesting questions decided by the United States Circuit Court of Appeals was the time when unification took place. Previous to this decision many church authorities differed as to when it became effective—whether at the time the Annual and General Conferences of the three churches adopted the Plan of Union by the required number of votes, or whether it was consummated at the Uniting Conference in Kansas City. The United States Court of Appeals held that “the three great branches of The Methodist Church were united at a conference held in Kansas City, Missouri, in May, 1939, after a Plan of Union had been agreed upon by conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church.” The conference held in Kansas City referred to, was the Uniting Conference. A point raised by the litigants contesting the validity of the unification was that when the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, entered the union, it quit business and ceased to exist. The attorneys representing The Methodist Church contended that when the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, entered the union, it ceased to exist as a separate identity, but it did not die; that it continued to live in association with the other two churches. The United States Circuit Court of Appeals held that the United Church is in reality the continuation of the old church.

Judge McElreath, who had much to do with the legal aspects of the unification, directs attention to the geographical, social, racial, and religious differences which had to be reconciled in order to effect the union. Church union, according to the author, is accomplished by the exercise of patience, charity, and a commendable spirit of conciliation.

Many books, even though best-sellers for a time, shortly lose their value. This book should be considered as standard reference for many years to come.

CHARLES O. LOUCKS

Lawyer, 10 South LaSalle St., Chicago, Illinois.

**Of Guilt and Hope.** By MARTIN NIEMOELLER. Translated by Renee Spodheim. New York: Philosophical Library, 1947. pp. 79. \$2.00.

**Dachau Sermons.** By MARTIN NIEMOELLER. Translated by Robert H. Pfeiffer. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947. pp. vii-97. \$1.50.

"Thy sins are forgiven": this word of Jesus, Martin Niemoeller holds to be the greatest that lips have ever uttered. He speaks with earned authority. The world now knows something of the outward things he suffered during the nearly eight years when he was the personal prisoner of Hitler. *Of Guilt and Hope*, two sermons, a letter and a chaplain's interview, reveals a significant fraction of the inward experience. Among the prophetic insights reaped is that which urges fellow Germans to confess their guilt in permitting the Nazis to lead the people to doom; it was a "catastrophic error" for the German church to keep out of politics.

He diagnoses the oncoming sickness. The Party began to put aside the so-called "incurables." And men who claimed to be Christian weakly said, "This might be right. The state spends a lot of money on those incurable people and they are only a burden to all the others. Is not doing away with them best for everybody?" The persecution of the Jews, the manner in which the invaded countries were treated, the goings on in Greece, in Poland, hostages lined up against the wall—against these sins the church did not clearly enough raise its voice. "We cannot get out of it with the excuse, 'I might have had to pay with my life had I spoken out.' In my Bible I have read, 'Defend the truth with thine own life.' . . . I ask myself over and over again what would have happened if 14,000 Evangelical ministers and the Evangelical communities, all over Germany, had defended the truth with their very lives in the year 1933 or 1934. . . . I can imagine that 30,000 to 40,000 Evangelical Christians would have been shortened by a head, but I can also imagine that we would have thus saved 30,000,000 to 40,000,000 lives."

Niemoeller's challenge is definite. It implicates all Christians in the world. It is this: The Christian churches for too many centuries have been willing to bless war, troops, and arms; they have prayed "in a very un-Christian way for the annihilation of their enemy." To be sure there were those who, taking their Bible seriously, went to concentration camps by the thousands to die rather than take part in war. But this heroism only exposes the rest of us for the sinners that we are. Instead of making a stand, we handed our consciences over to the state. "Up to our day the Church has seldom uttered a word, stating clearly that wars are means forbidden and hated by God for the attainment even of the highest and most justifiable goals. . . . We knew no better than to choose, as a last resort, to prevent violence with violence." And now we are called upon "to atone for and change our ways if we want to continue to spread God's word"; to be "another kind of people."

*Dachau Sermons* also comes straight from the center of this great experienter of the issues of life. The drive seems to spring from an unforgettable incident. It was the sharing of the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper in a concentration camp, Christmas Eve, 1944, with a Dutch cabinet minister, two Norwegian shippers, a British major, a Yugoslavian diplomat, and a Macedonian journalist: Calvinists, Lutherans, Anglicans, and Greek Orthodox. This meeting of spirit with spirit burned so deeply into the celebrant that he is now irrecoverably ecumenical.

ALLAN A. HUNTER

Minister of the North Hollywood Congregational Church, Los Angeles, California.

**The American Pulpit Series.** 16 vols. Abingdon-Cokesbury. Paper, 25¢ each, \$2.00 any 8, \$3.75 all 16. Each of these pocket-size booklets contains sermons by eight distinguished preachers; the whole series represents a cross section of the best in American preaching.

**Religion in Economics.** By John R. Everett. King's Crown Press, New York. \$2.50. A study of three economists of the early nineteen-hundreds: John Bates Clark, Richard T. Ely, and Simon N. Patten—who believed that religion should be the guiding principle of economics, and who had considerable influence on recent social gains.

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